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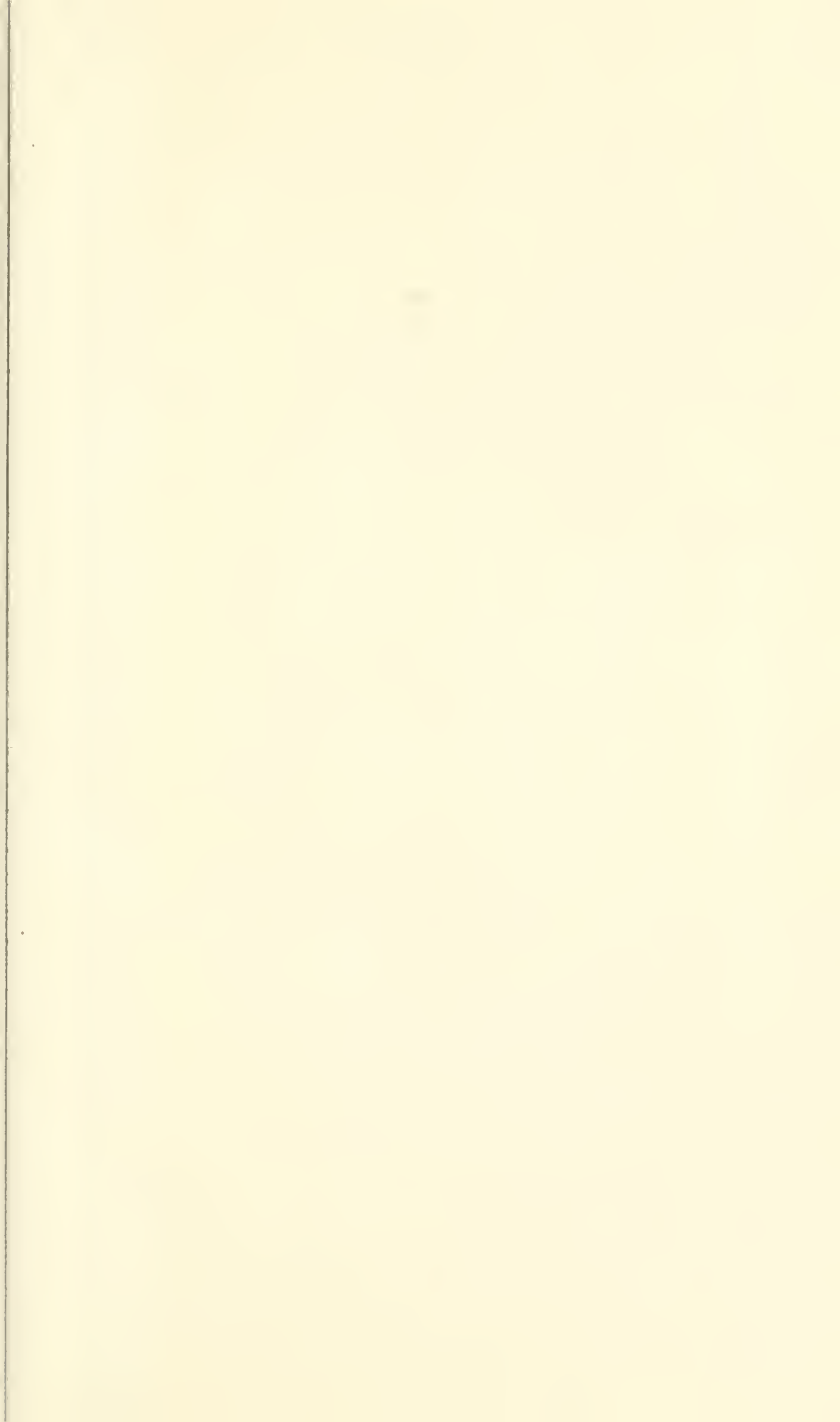
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HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF THE  
VILLAGE OF BATAVIA,  
BY  
WILLIAM SEAVER.



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# HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE VILLAGE OF BATAVIA.

As the reminiscences of "Olden Times," which we have occasionally published in the "Spirit of the Times," have been received with favor, we now propose to sketch a brief history of the VILLAGE OF BATAVIA, from its birth in the primeval forest, to what it now is, one of the loveliest in the State. We do this, not for any special pre-eminence which it has attained, but because it is the oldest Village West of Genesee River, from whence, as from a common centre, radiated the settlement of the "Holland Purchase."

For such facts, we are chiefly indebted to the letters of JOSEPH ELLICOTT and PAUL BUSTI, and to JAMES BRISBANE, DAVID E. EVANS, RICHARD SMITH, TRUMBULL CARY, and HINMAN HOLDEN, all old residents of this place, especially Mr. BRISBANE, who is not only one of the first settlers in this Village, but has also resided longer on the "Holland Purchase," than any other white man now living.

In the latter part of the Summer of 1797, Mr. ELLICOTT came from Philadelphia to Geneseo, to attend a Treaty with the Indians at that place, when the lands West of Genesee River were purchased from them by ROBERT MORRIS. The Treaty was concluded in September of that year. He came alone, and on horseback, by way of Wilksbarre, Tioga Point, Bath and Dansville, and returned to Philadelphia in February following, having in the meantime made arrangements to commence the survey of the Holland Company's Lands.

horseback, the same route as before, passing by the way of Avon to Buffalo, where he arrived early in June, and established his head-quarters for the season, on the spot where the Mansion House now stands.

On the 18th of April, 1798, JAMES BRISBANE and JOHN THOMPSON left Philadelphia, with a supply of stores for Mr. ELLICOTT, and the surveyors on the "Purchase." They came by the way of New York, Albany, the Mohawk River, and Wood Creek, to Oswego, and thence through Lake Ontario to the mouth of Genesee River, in Batteauxs, where they arrived on the 15th of May. Mr. BRISBANE here separated from Mr. THOMPSON, and went up the Genesee River to Williamsburgh, with one Batteaux loaded with stores for the "Company," and Mr. THOMPSON proceeded by the way of Queenston to Buffalo, with the balance of the stores. Mr. BRISBANE remained at Williamsburgh, (between Genesee and Mount Morris,) until the following October, and then removed with the stores to what is now the village of Stafford, where an establishment was continued until the 2d of January, 1800, when the party, consisting of JOSEPH ELLICOTT, BENJAMIN ELLICOTT, JAMES W. STEVENS, EBENEZER CARY and JAMES BRISBANE, left that station and returned to Philadelphia.

In March, 1799, JOSEPH and BENJAMIN ELLICOTT went to Philadelphia, for the purpose of conferring with the General Agent, (PAUL BUSTI,) and arranging for a continuance of the surveys. They returned the same Spring, bringing with them JAMES W. STEVENS. Mr. ELLICOTT went to Buffalo, where he remained until the survey was completed, in the Fall of that year, and then came to Stafford. In January, 1800, he returned to Philadelphia, as above stated, for the purpose of making a Report of the surveys, and on the 1st day of November, 1800, (his birth-day, being forty years old,) he was appointed Agent of the Holland Land Company.

In November, 1800, Mr. ELLICOTT left Philadelphia, and came by the way of New York, Albany, &c., to Buffalo, where he arrived in January, 1801. He remained there a short time, and then removed to Ransom's Tavern, in what is now called Clarence, where he opened an office for the sale of the Holland Company's Lands. By reference to his letters, written at that place, we notice that he sometimes dated at "Ransomville," at others, "Ransom's," "Sweet Water Farm," "Pine Grove," and West Genesee," at the same time Buffalo was known as "New Amsterdam," and also as "Buffalo Creek."

From the best information we can obtain, it would appear that early in 1801, probably in January or February, Mr. ELLICOTT fixed his mind upon this place, (Batavia,) as the most eligible spot for locating the Land Office, and building up a Town, and the first intimation we discover of such intention, is in a letter to RICHARD M. STODDARD, Canandaigua, dated at "Ransomville, 17th February, 1801," in which he says: "I expect to make my establishment at or near the Bend of Tonnewanta, and there let the Genesee Road fork, one to be directed to Buffalo and the other to Queens-

ton, and place my office in the fork looking Eastward. Should you be inclined to improve a forty acre Lot there, you can have it." [The "Fork" is where the Arsenal now stands.]

In an other letter bearing upon the same subject, dated "Ransom's, March 6, 1801," and addressed to EZRA WAITE, Esq., he says: "In respect to the Lots at the Bend of Tonnewanta, they will be laid off in the early part of the Spring. The Road will be laid, (I expect,) from the new Bridge to the Big Plains; I think likely in the course of two or three weeks, and probably some Lots at the Bend; but previous to any selection, I shall set apart such of them as I shall conceive best calculated for Public purposes, but nevertheless, there will be a great sufficiency left for yourself, and other of your friends, after the selection so made."

In a letter to STEPHEN RUSSELL, Bloomfield, written about the 10th of May, 1801, Mr. ELLICOTT says: "I expect, shortly, to have all the Lots laid out at the Bend. Since I saw you, I conceived it best to postpone them for the present, in order to attend to laying out a piece of Road before the leaves become so thick as to prevent us from seeing the country. However, Mr. RUSSELL may feel himself perfectly safe. Should I not be able to furnish him with a Lot fronting on the Creek, it shall not exceed one Lot from it."

#### THE FIRST BUILDING IN BATAVIA.

We now come to an important era in our history. It appears from the above, that early in 1801, this place was determined upon as the site for a Village, and the permanent location of the Land Office, and as this fact was undoubtedly soon promulgated, several people were attracted here for the purpose of taking a look, with the view of making it a place of residence, and among them was a man of the name of ABEL ROWE.

Mr. ROWE, arrived in March, 1801, located himself on the Lot directly opposite the present Land Office, and immediately thereafter raised the first Building which was ever erected in this Village, of any description. It was situated on the spot now occupied by the Dwelling House of the Hon. HORACE U. SOPER.

We are unable to describe this Building, further than that it was a large Log House; that on being completed it was occupied by Mr. ROWE as a House of public entertainment, and that soon it was dignified with the name of "ROWE'S HOTEL," as appears from the Postscript of a letter from Mr. ELLICOTT, to "JOHN M. MINOR, Genesee," respecting some Pork, dated "West Genesee, May 12, 1801," in which he says: "A line forwarded either to the Transit Store-House, or Mr. ROWE'S HOTEL, at the Bend of Tonnewanta, will come to hand."

Soon after this, STEPHEN RUSSELL, put up a Log House, on the spot where the "GENESEE HOUSE" now stands, which was the second Building erected in this Village. It may be well to mention also, that in March, 1801, the late ISAAC SUTHERLAND erected a Log House on the farm where

the family now reside, two miles West of the Village, and that in the same month the late Gen. WORTHY L. CHURCHILL, and Col. Wm. RUMSEY, settled on the farm upon which they long resided, three miles East of this village.

#### NAMING THE VILLAGE.

As there is something quite amusing and interesting connected with this event, we shall be pardoned for detailing such particulars as have come under our notice, and which we derive chiefly from the letters of Mr. ELLICOTT, and Mr. BUSTI. The first mention of the subject, which we can discover, is in a letter from JOSEPH ELLICOTT, to PAUL BUSTI dated "West Genesee, (Ransom's,) 30th May, 1861." In this he says: "Finding it extremely inconvenient living from the Post Road, I am about making an establishment thereon." [A Post Route had previously been established, leading from Canandaigua by Aves, to the Bend, (Batavia) and from thence through the "Big Plains," on the Tonawanda Indian Reservation, to Lewiston.] "I could have wished, however, for a place more central in my district, for the Queenston and Buffalo Road to have forked, but the Tonawanda Reservation prevented. This establishment will be situate in the 10th Township and 2d Range. The Tonawanda Creek, a stream of water 30 feet in breadth, will pass through the Town, at the Western extremity of which, the two most public Roads in this country will fork: one leading to Queenston, in Upper Canada, and the other to New Amsterdam, at the East end of Lake Erie, Presque Isle, and New Connecticut.

"The Building Lots will contain 40 acres of land, 20 perches in front, and 320 in depth, being a sufficiency of land, well cultivated, to raise bread, and support a family. This place being the first establishment, and one from its local situation cannot otherwise be than always a well situated Village, and probably the next county Town, and a Post Town, as soon as I can have a building erected for an Office. I say, from all these circumstances, as well as from the circumstance of Mr. LYNKLEIGH calling his first establishment Cananovia, I beg leave to compliment this place with the name of BUSTIVILLE, or BUSTIA. Several Lots are already spoken for, and ONE HOUSE ERECTED."

In reply to this letter, Mr. BUSTI writes to Mr. ELLICOTT, under date of "Philadelphia, 24th June, 1861," as follows: "It was to be wished that your first establishment should be central, but as the choice of place is to be directed by local conveniences, I cannot but approve your selection in Township Twelve, Range Two, Tonawanda Creek, and the fork of the Roads afford a a proper site for erecting a Town. But, my dear Sir, please to set aside the idea of eternalizing the memory of me, by giving my name to that town. Besides that common vanity has very little power of tickling me, I should fear that your intention of honoring me, would just have a contrary effect. A name so strange as mine is, may very easily lead our posterity into the belief that the Town received its name from some Sav-



age, famous by the murders and robbery. I beg you to spare me the risk of being called in that way, to the recollection of men.

"Towns ought to be called by the name of their founders. Rome has perpetuated the remembrance of ROMULUS. ELLICOTTSTOWN must also eternize yours. This is the more proper, as you are to be the FOUNDER, the principal inhabitant, and in some way its Lord, as no doubt you will take there, part of the lands allowed to you according to contract."

Previous to his receipt of the above letter, Mr. ELLICOTT writes again to Mr. BURT, dated "Ransom's, West Genesee, July 14th, 1861," in which he says: "It is with pleasure that I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2d June, which came to hand the 7th instant, while I was laying out the TOWN OF BURTIA OR BURTIVILLE, a plan of which you will find herewith enclosed. The execution of that business prevented me from furnishing you with the information you require, at a more early period."

From this extract, we not only learn that he had determined to call the place BURTIA or BURTIVILLE, but also the particular time when the Village was surveyed. His views, however, in regard to the name, were soon after changed, as will appear from the following extract of a letter to Mr. BURT, dated "Ransom's, West Genesee, July 31, 1861," which says: "Your letter of the 14th ultimo I had the pleasure to receive on the 16th instant. — Although since my last, of the 14th, enclosing a Draft entitled A PLAN OF BURTIVILLE, I have nothing new regarding sales to communicate. I nevertheless conceive it proper to early apprise you, that the place has not been promulgated by that name, and to inform you that you may rest satisfied that I shall not run the risk of your displeasure by persisting in an intention to honor the place by giving it so worthy a name. If, Sir, the word BURTIVILLE conveys to the mind something forcible, my sensation differs from other men's if the word OLDESTARNEVER does not convey something more so."

In writing to JOHN THOMPSON, July 18th, 1861, directing him to go to Canandaigua, he says: "You can return by Big Tree, and pay Mares for the pork, and from thence you can explore the Road from Big Tree to the new Town at the Bend. That place is not to be called BURTIVILLE, as I had formerly an intention, that gentleman not possessing a wish to have his name perpetuated in that way."

After Mr. ELLICOTT had abandoned the name of Burtiville, it seems that he designed to call it TONNEWANTA, as appears from the following letter to JOHN THOMPSON, dated "Pine Grove, (Ransom's) July 31, 1861:"

"In my last letter I neglected mentioning that I had given over the idea of covering the House at TONNEWANTA TOWN with Bark. Indeed I have ever considered those kind of coverings as money thrown away, when made use of for Dwelling Houses, as all work done merely temporary is labor, time, and money lost: therefore my object is to have everything executed for permanency. Mr. EGGLESTON has engaged to be at TONNEWANTA in two



weeks, and make shingles and cover the House in a good and substantial manner. I could have wished it done sooner, but am of the opinion this is the shortest period. If the roads were not too bad to bring some laths from the saw mill it would be better shingle on than to split stuff. However, if laths cannot be procured by the period the shingles are made, I suppose rived laths will have to do.

"P. S.—The pitch of the roof to be middling flat. I enclose a PLAN OF TONNEWANTA which you will find is at last modified agreeably to my ideas when last there; that is, to have the PUBLIC SQUARE in the forks of the Big Tree and Connewaugus Roads."

[The precise point of these FORKS, is at the centre of the Gate in front of the Hon. DAVID E. EVANS' present Dwelling House, and the Roads leading South, and West centred at, and started from, the same point.]

Our object in copying the above letter almost entire, at this point of our history, is for the purpose of showing that our village was once called TONNEWANTA; but as we shall soon have occasion to speak of the "HOUSE" to which it refers, we hope the reader will bear the letter in mind, as that BUILDING, when completed, became of no less consequence than the focus of the Holland Land Company.

Having thus shown the various names by which the Town had been designated, we now come to the time when its present name was first intimated, and which, we find was in a letter from Mr. BUSTI to Mr. ELLICOTT, dated "Philadelphia, 6th August, 1801." Mr. BUSTI introduced it in this wise: "By the sketch of the Town whose name deriving from mine, I wish you to suppress, and to change to that of its Founder, OR IF YOU PREFER IT, INTO THAT OF BATAVIA, I am apprized of its favorable situation. There is no doubt of its rapidly increasing, as all the conveniences of life will soon be found united on that spot. I approve of the cheapness of your prices for the lots, but as it may induce people to speculation, I leave it to you to consider whether it would not be advisable to oblige the purchaser to build a convenient House, in a fixed period, on each Lot.

"The site of your office is chosen with judgment, and I hope will stop all the travellers to the West, to make bargains with you. I suppose that in the neighborhood of the office you will take 500 acres, the half of the 1000 allowed to you according to contract."

The next mention we find of BATAVIA, is in a letter from Mr. ELLICOTT to Mr. BUSTI, dated "Ransom's West Genesee, September 8th, 1801," in which, after acknowledging the receipt of the above letter, he says: "In respect to the Lots IN THE TOWN OF BATAVIA, I had anticipated your idea. I dispose of none but to absolute settlers, and only one Lot to one man.

"My intention in laying out this Town was for the purpose of forming a compact settlement, and should I dispose of four or five Lots to one man, my object would be defeated; and if the place should ever become

of much importance, the purchaser of a Town Lot will be enabled to speculate upon part of his front, which I conceived would be a sufficient inducement to encourage the settlement of the place. In respect to the 500 acres, the half of the 1000 allowed by contract, I have not as yet fixed its boundaries."

Previous to the receipt of Mr. ELLICOTT's last letter, Mr. BUSTI again writes to Mr. ELLICOTT, "23d September, 1801," in which he alludes to the name of the Town, as follows:—

"In reading over the suppositions of LE FAVRE, I observe he comprehends in his speculations some Town Lots at BEND. I conclude this to be the name you gave to the Town laid out in Township 12, and that you have taken it from the Bending of the Creek and the Main Road.— Please to tell me whether I am in the right, in order to distinguish it on the map."

The next allusion to the name of BATAVIA, is in a letter from Mr. ELLICOTT to Mr. BUSTI, dated "West Genesee, Oct. 3, 1801," which is as follows:

"In my last, of the 12th September ult., (written at Canandaigua,) I promised to write you immediately on my return to my office in O., (Ransom's,) at which place I expected to arrive in a few days, but on my arrival at BATAVIA, I found it necessary to remain there to stimulate the hands employed in the erection of a MILL DAM at that place; my Brother who has that business in charge, being at times, in consequence of indisposition with a slight fever, unable to attend to it. In consequence thereof, I was detained so long that I did not reach my quarters here, until the 30th ultimo."

We now come to the climax of this part of our subject; the definitive promulgation of BATAVIA, as the name by which this Village should be known through all time. It is disclosed, (we may say authoritatively) in a letter from JOSEPH ELLICOTT to PAUL BUSTI, which is dated "BATAVIA, 7th November, 1801." As this is undoubtedly THE FIRST LETTER EVER WRITTEN AT THIS PLACE UNDER THE NAME OF BATAVIA, it is worthy of special notice, and not for this circumstance only, but for the announcement which it makes of the NAME, as well as for other interesting facts.

The following are extracts from this letter:—

"BATAVIA, 7th Nov., 1801.

"I have delayed writing until this period, with a hope that I should have been enabled to inform you that the Saw Mill we are erecting at this place, to accommodate the settlement with boards, was in motion, but in this I am disappointed. This season has been extremely unfavorable for business, in this part of the country, as well on account of the continual rains, as that of almost the whole of the people in this infant settlement having been afflicted with the Billious and other Fevers, which circumstance has greatly retarded all our operations, as well as the settlement, and add to the catalogue of our misfortunes.

"The snow commenced falling the night before last, and is now ten inches deep. I am happy, however, to be enabled to inform you, that amidst all the difficulties we have had to contend with, the Saw Mill is in such a state of forwardness, that without something very extraordinary occurs, we shall be able shortly, to supply the settlement with boards, an article much wanted. \* \* \* \* \*

"In regard to the name of this place, it heretofore was called the BEND, from the circumstance of the Bend of the Creek, and is generally known by that name, BUT I HAVE BAPTIZED IT BY THE NAME OF BATAVIA."

"Having as yet not removed my office from Mr. RANSOM'S, I am unable to detail particulars of the Agency."

The Village having thus received its name, we proceed to notice matters in general, connected with its growth. Trifling as some of them may appear, it should be recollected that we are not writing a national history, in which nothing but leading and great events are detailed, but are simply attempting to trace the progress of a country village, from its origin in the wilderness. For this purpose, the leading events which transpired here, consequently become of the same comparative importance, as those of national consequence, when writing a national history.

The Saw Mill, at that period, had become an object of great solicitude.—Its construction seems to have progressed quite slowly, but it was completed about the middle of December, as appears from the following extract of a letter from Mr. ELLICOTT to Mr. BUSTI, dated "Ransom's, December 4, 1801," in which he says: "The Saw Mill I have been erecting at Batavia, which has cost a deal of labor, not being a natural seat, but a place where a convenience of this kind is absolutely necessary, will, the millwright informs me, be in motion, by the 10th instant; at which period we expect to begin to make ourselves and the settlers comfortable floors, &c. which will be a great acquisition to our present situation."

This Saw Mill was situated directly above the present Grist Mill, and was kept in operation until about 1822, when it was torn down.

As there was no Pine Timber nearer to the Mill than at a place then called "the Pinery," now "Pine Hill," in Elba, six miles distant, and as a great demand for that kind of lumber was anticipated, Mr. ELLICOTT employed ISAAC SUTHERLAND to cut a road to the "Pinery," and the job was commenced on the 18th of January, 1802.

In regard to the Building to which reference has been made, as designed for the Land Office, it appears to have been completed some time in December, 1801. It was a two-story Log Building of respectable dimensions, and situated directly in front of the West wing of D. E. EVANS' present Dwelling House, between it and the Road, and in rear of it a kitchen or Log House was erected, for the accommodation of Mr. ELLICOTT and his household. On being completed, this establishment was immediately occupied by JOHN THOMPSON and others in the employ of the Company, as

a Boarding place, but Mr. ELLICOTT did not remove his office from Ransom's until the following Spring, as will appear hereafter.

#### CUTTING THE ROAD THROUGH THE VILLAGE.

There being no regular Roads at this time, Mr. ELLICOTT engaged JOHN LAMBERTON, who was associated with a man of the name of MAYO, to cut the *Road through the Village of Batavia*. The contract was made at "Ransom's," on the 20th of February, 1802, and Mr. LAMBERTON, (who is now living in this vicinity,) informs us that he returned to Batavia the next day, with MAYO, one of them bringing on his back a *Tent*, furnished by Mr. ELLICOTT, and the other a Keg of Whiskey. They immediately commenced the job, which was, to cut the Road 100 feet wide and two miles long, from the West bounds of the Village, (where the Arsenal now stands,) and for this service, according to Mr. LAMBERTON's statement, they were to receive Twelve Dollars per acre. It was completed in May following, and that Road was, and ever will be, the Main Street, from East to West, through the Village of Batavia. As Mr. LAMBERTON's contract simply required him to cut down the Timber, and cut it up fit for logging, it was left for others to clear it off, and according to his recollection, that labor was chiefly performed by the owners of Lots bounded on the Road, during the Summer of that year.

Thus was our beautiful "Genesee Street" opened Forty-seven years since, and Mr. LAMBERTON, who performed the work, and Mr. BRISBANE, who furnished him with Provisions while thus engaged, are still living amongst us, and witnesses of the wonderful transformation which this place has undergone within that period. From a dense Forest, they have seen a beautiful Village arise, and the whole surrounding country they have seen converted from an unbroken wilderness into fruitful fields.

It appears that at an early day the importance of having a Grist Mill at this place had occupied the attention of Mr. ELLICOTT, but the first allusion to it which we can discover is in a letter from him to Mr. BUSTI, dated "Batavia, Feb. 28th, 1802," and forwarded by his brother, BENJAMIN ELLICOTT. In this letter, after alluding to some business matters which his brother would explain, he says: "His object is also to procure such necessities in the Lower Country, as will be required for the completion of the Grist Mill erecting on account of the Company, and also to procure, if practicable, a good Mill-Wright to construct the running gear of said Mill."

The building of this Mill seems not to have progressed very rapidly, as, we are told, it was not completed until the latter part of 1804.

#### NEW COUNTY—GENESEE.

Soon after Mr. ELLICOTT had determined to locate the Land Office and build up a Town at this place, he conceived the idea of procuring a Division of Ontario county to which Batavia then belonged, and of erecting a new County, with Batavia as the County Seat. His first movement to accom-



plish that object is disclosed in a letter to DUDLEY SALTONSTALL, Esq., dated at "Canandaigua, February 24th, 1802," in which he requests that gentleman "To draw a Petition for the Division of the County of Ontario, in which the Genesee River and the meridian drawn from the Forks of Shanahagsquaicon Creek and Genesee River, to the Boundary Line of Pennsylvania, shall be the Eastern boundary of the new County, to be called the County of —, and to extend to the Western part of the State of New York."

In another letter written at the same place, February 25, 1802, addressed to DAVID A. OGDEN, Esq., he says, in reference to the Division: "The object is so important, as it regards the interest of the proprietors of lands West of the Genesee River, that I conceive it proper to make the attempt, and for that purpose mean to carry a Petition to the ensuing Town Meeting, and procure as many signers as the short period will admit. \* \* \* \* Since you mention to Mr. SALTONSTALL that there is a probability that we can effect a Division of the County, I will endeavor to meet you in Albany, about the middle of March for that purpose. \* \* \* \* The conduct of the Supervisors of the County is of such a nature that makes it indispensable to effect a Division, if practicable. \* \* \* Should it be out of my power to attend, I shall forward the Petition by a person who is so well acquainted with every circumstance, and the territory in question, that it will be near the same thing; therefore I hope no circumstance will prevent your attending." In writing to Mr. BUSTI, from Canandaigua, March 1st, 1802, Mr. ELLICOTT further says: "I expect to meet Mr. OGDEN in Albany, the middle of this month for the purpose of trying to effect a Division of the County."

Having judiciously attended to all the preliminary arrangements, Mr. ELLICOTT started for Albany about the 10th of March, to lay the subject before the Legislature, and to secure the favorable action of that body, and the success of his efforts may be seen in the following extract of a letter to Mr. BUSTI, dated "City of Albany, March 27th, 1802," in which he says:

"Mr. OGDEN will inform you of our success in carrying the Law for the Division of the County of Ontario, through both Houses of the Legislature. It, however, has to pass the Council of Revision, and as it is in their power to negative the Law unless two-thirds of both Houses shall ultimately agree to it, it cannot be said to have passed, until it gets through the fiery ordeal of that body. The Governor being one of the members, and one of the Agents [of the Holland Company recently treating his Excellency a little roughly, may have an influence not favorable to the object. It was a little unfortunate that this circumstance took place at this epoch. Many members of the Legislature have spoken to me on the subject, and it has required all my ingenuity to impress on their minds that the Company, and their General Agent, was of the same Politics of the present prevailing party in this country. As soon as the Law passes the Council of Revision, I shall send you a copy."



On the 1st of April, 1802, Mr. ELLICOTT again wrote to Mr. BUSTI, from Albany, as follows: "I herewith enclose a copy of the Act entitled "An Act to erect part of the County of Ontario into a separate County, by the name of Genesee."

"I mentioned to you in my letter of the 26th ult., that I had some doubts of the passage of the Law for the Division of the County, through the Council of Revision. I therefore took occasion to pay some attention to his Excellency the Governor, and remove some unfavorable impressions; since which, the Law has passed that body, and is safely lodged in the Secretary's Office, out of all danger."

We have been thus particular in reference to this important event, not only to show when, and by whom, it was accomplished, but as being intimately connected with the early growth and prosperity of Batavia, in consequence of its having been designated in the above Law as the County Seat of the new County of Genesee.

Soon after the passage of this Law, Mr. ELLICOTT returned to the County of Genesee, and some time between the 10th and 20th of April, removed the Land Office from Ransom's to the new Building erected for that purpose in Batavia.

#### COURT HOUSE AND JAIL.

His attention was then immediately given to the erection of a *Court House and Jail*, in order to carry out in good faith the pledges made to the Legislature, as stated in a letter from him to Mr. BUSTI, dated Batavia, May 8, 1802, in which he says: "I am happy in the promptness with which you have agreed to carry into effect the erection of the Court House and Jail, *as stipulated to be erected at the EXPENSE OF THE COMPANY*, by Mr. D. A. OGDEN and myself. This stipulation was one of the principal inducements towards our effecting the passage of the Law establishing the new County. This money I conceive to be well laid out, for had we not have procured this Act for establishing the County, and bounded it as we have fortunately done, the Company would, in all probability, have had to erect another Court House and Jail, as well as that at Canandaigua, at their expense, and in which they would have been but little benefitted.

"It was in contemplation by Mr. JAMES WADSWORTH, and interest was actually making for that purpose, so to divide the County of Ontario, as to make his residence in the Town of *Hartford*, (now Geneseo,) on the Genesee River, the County town of a County." \* \* \* \*

"In regard to the Court House and Jail, your ideas perfectly accord with my own, in erecting them in such a manner as will be the most economical, and at the same time answer well the purposes intended. I have received a Plan from New York, which my friend D. A. OGDEN, was kind enough to procure from an Architect of that place. It is not, in my opinion, calculated for the meridian of this Western World, this Century, but might probably answer for the meridian of the Cities of London or Amsterdam."

In pursuance of his object, Mr. ELLICOTT employed ISAAC SUTHERLAND and SAMUEL F. GEER as Chief Architects, and resolved to adopt his own plan, as appears from the following extract of a letter to Mr. BUSTI, dated June 4th, 1802:

"We are now preparing to commence the erection of the Court House, and find, after trying all the various plans that have suggested themselves to our minds, that the cheapest and best plan will be, to make the Court House and Jail, and Jail-keeper's House, under one Roof, and to erect the Building of Wood. Brick would be much more costly, but the Brick of this country is scarcely fit for Buildings, unless kept constantly covered thick with paint and oil. The Brick moulders away in a few years.

"This Building, however, will cost considerable. I shall, as soon as the Carpenters have made an estimate of the Timber, be able to calculate nearly the expense, which will not be so great at it otherwise would if we had no Saw Mill. The site fixed on for the Court House will be within 250 yards of the Mill, and of course there will be much expense saved in transporting Plank, Timber, &c."

The work was prosecuted with vigor, and the latter part of October or first of November the Frame was set up. The raising was a Herculean task of three days, and in consequence of the sparseness of population, required all the men that could be mustered in the surrounding country, even from Buffalo. The timber was exceedingly heavy, being almost exclusively Oak, and we are told that the workmanship was so perfect, as to elicit the admiration of every one who saw it. Not the slightest mistake was discoverable, and when the frame was put together, every joint was as perfect as mallet and chisel could make it. It stands yet, a proud monument of mechanical skill and architectural beauty, and we trust that the time is nigh at hand, when, through the judicious liberality of the Board of Supervisors, and the public spirit of the Town of Batavia, this fine old Building will be rejuvenated, and converted into a Town House. Such a House is very much needed for various public purposes, as all are aware, and it is due to the County, to the Town, and to the memory of the past, that this Building should be thus honorably appropriated.

The Building was enclosed in the Fall of 1802, and the finishing had so far progressed that the first sessions of the Courts after the organization of the County were held in it, in the Spring of 1803. It was not finished, however, until 1804. Thus much for the Court House, which, though not the first, was one of the first Frame Buildings erected in the Town or County.

#### FIRST FRAMED BUILDING.

The first framed Building erected in the Village is yet standing, and occupies a conspicuous position directly West of the Presbyterian Meeting House. It was built by ISAAC SUTHERLAND, in March and April, 1802, as


a residence for himself and family, and about the same time he, in connexion with Mr. GEER, put up another frame building, designed for their own use, as a *Joiners' Shop*, on the ground now covered by the Presbyterian Meeting House.

The House was occupied by Mr. SUTHERLAND until the Summer of 1803, when it was purchased by JAMES BRISBANE, for \$700, and for a few years occupied by JAMES W. STEVENS. It then became the residence of Mr. BRISBANE for many years, and is still owned, though not occupied by him.

#### FIRST STORE.

The country being entirely destitute and greatly in want of Merchants' Goods, at the time of which we are now speaking, Mr. BRISBANE undertook to supply the demand, and under the patronage of the Agents of the Holland Company, went to New York early in the Spring of 1802, purchased a stock suitable for this market, and left that city with his Goods, on the 23d of April. They came in a Sloop to Albany, and from thence by way of the Mohawk, Lewiston and Buffalo to this place, where they arrived about the middle of May.

His first business was to procure a place for his Merchandize, and for that purpose he hired the Joiners' Shop above mentioned, of SUTHERLAND and GEER, which was then just covered but unfinished, and in that building he immediately opened the first stock of Goods ever brought into the village. In the course of a month or two he purchased the building for \$300, and finished it, and it was occupied as a Store and Office, until it was removed to make room for the Meeting House, in 1822.

During the Summer of 1802, WM. MUNGER erected the West half of what is now known as the *Keyes House*. It was  for a Tavern, and occupied first by Mr. MUNGER, then by a Mr. ROW and afterwards by WM. KEYES, who enlarged, improved and sustained it for many years, as the principal Hotel in the Village. It is now in the "sear and yellow leaf," and occupied as a Cradle Factory.

During the same Summer Mr. ELLICOTT erected what is now the East wing of D. E. EVANS' present dwelling house. He moved the Land Office into that building as soon as it was completed, (late in 1802 or early in 1803,) and tore down the two-story Log Land Office.

The same Summer STEPHEN RUSSELL put up a two-story frame building, by way of addition to his log Tavern, where the *Genesee House* now stands.

But without going into further detail, it will be sufficient for the present to state, that at this time the population began to increase rapidly, so much so indeed, that with two or three Taverns and the important acquisition of a long celebrated Fiddler, by the name of NOBLE, they were able to muster sufficient for a Ball, every two or three weeks.

#### THE POST-OFFICE.

It has already been stated, that at an early day, and prior to the settlement of the Holland Purchase, a Post Route had been established between

Albany and Lewiston, passing through this place; but at the period of which we are now writing, no Post Office, except at Lewiston, had been established West of Genesee River.

It was very natural, therefore, that Mr. ELLICOTT, whose own correspondence was necessarily considerable and important, should, immediately after locating the Land Office here, seek to procure the establishment of a Post Office. To effect this object, he at once addressed a Petition to GIDEON GRANGER, then Post Master General, and as that petition was drawn up with much perspicuity, and covered the whole ground, we cannot interest the reader more than by inserting it entire. It is as follows:

“VILLAGE OF BATAVIA, May 15, 1802.

“DEAR SIR:—In consequence of the inconvenience that results to the inhabitants in this part of the State of New York, for the want of a Post Office, I take the liberty to solicit the Post Master General to establish one at this village, which, last session of the Legislature, was established the County Town of the County of Genesee, in the Western part of the State of New York. Although I cannot flatter the Post Master General with much augmentation to the revenue which may arise from an establishment of this kind, yet as the country is fast settling, and the Land Office is kept here for the sale of a large extent of country, there is little doubt but that in a short period, a considerable revenue will arise from this establishment, as well as be productive of great convenience to the inhabitants.

“There is another circumstance which, we presume, will have a considerable influence with the Post Master General in granting us this favor, and that is, the establishment asked for, will not add any additional expense to the United States, for carrying the mail, the situation of this Village being directly on the Post Road leading through the Genesee Country to Niagara. Our nearest Post Office is Twenty-five miles distant, which is on the East side of Genesee River, at Hartford, (now Avon,) in the county of Ontario.

§ “In order more fully to give you the best information to enable you to judge of the merits of the favor we ask, I have enclosed a map of the Western part of the State of New York, and delineated thereon the point where the village is erected; which will point out more clearly its local situation, than any geographical description I can give. A friend of mine, Mr. SETH PEASE, sometime since informed me, that he expected to be some time at the General Post Office, and, if that gentleman should be there at this period, permit me to refer you to him, whose knowledge of the country will afford you ample information. Permit me at the same time I am asking for the establishment of the Post Office, to recommend Mr. JAMES BRISBAN as a fit and proper character to take charge of said Office, provided the Post Master General shall think it expedient to make the establishment.

For any information in relation to Mr. Brisban's character, should the Post Master General deem it necessary, he will permit me to refer him to Mr. Pease.



"In behalf of a number of the inhabitants of this village and the adjacent country, I beg leave to subscribe myself with due respect and esteem, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOSEPH ELLICOTT,

"Agent Holland Land Company."

In compliance with the above petition, the Post Master General appointed JAMES BRISBANE as Post Master at this place, and designated the name of the Office as "*Genesee Court House*," (which, for short, was written "*Genesee C. H.*") It received that name instead of Batavia, in consequence of there being at that time a Post Office by the name of Batavia, in Greene county.

Mr. BRISBANE's commission was dated July 21st, 1802, and he entered upon the duties of his Office some time in August following, keeping the Post Office in his store. At that time the mail was carried but once in two weeks, sometimes on foot and sometimes on horseback, going from Canandaigua by Batavia, to Lewiston and Fort Niagara; and returning by way of Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Williamsville, Van Deventer's and the Indian Village, to this place; but soon after, a weekly mail was established, direct from Canandaigua to Buffalo.

As Painters were scarce here in those days, there being no particular necessity for their services, the consequence was that Mr. BRISBANE had no Sign for his office until 1804. In the Spring of that year Miss BRISBANE (now Mrs. TRUMBULL CARY) and Miss STEVENS, (sister of JAMES W. STEVENS, and afterwards Mrs. BRISBANE) came to reside in the village. Finding the Post Master destitute of a Sign, Miss STEVENS proposed to paint one, provided she could be furnished with a board, and the necessary paints and brushes. She was accordingly supplied with the materials, which resulted in the production of a very neatly painted and lettered sign. This was the only Post Office sign in use here until some time after the writer of this sketch took charge of the Post Office, in 1823. He procured a new one, but at the same time took special pains to preserve the old one; and during the time the office remained in his hands, (which was about twenty years) he twice had the letters re-painted, carefully preserving their original shape and color. That sign may still be seen at the Post Office, where we trust it will always be preserved as a relic of the olden time, and be held as an appendage to the Office, to be transmitted from one incumbent to another through all the mutations of future years.

While on the Post Office subject, we may as well go through with its history at once, as to take it up at detached periods.

Mr. BRISBANE continued to hold the Office until the Fall of 1806, when he sold his Goods and rented his Store to EBENEZER CARY, with a view of engaging in business in New York, and Mr. CARY was appointed Post Master in his place. Mr. CARY held the Office until the 3d of June, 1815, when he resigned in favor of his brother TRUMBULL CARY, who immediately received the appointment and held the commission until July 1st, 1829, a term of fourteen years.



It is proper here to notice that TRUMBULL CARY having been a Clerk for Mr. BRISBANE, and also for his brother EBENEZER, had virtually discharged the duties of Post Master from 1805.

On the 13th of January, 1823, Mr. CARY finding it inconvenient to devote his personal attention to the Office, voluntarily, and very generously placed it in charge of WM. SEAVER, (the writer of this sketch,) allowing him the entire emoluments of the Office, and simply retaining the franking privilege and such official powers as were necessary for him to execute.

[For this unsolicited favor from the hands of Mr. CARY, the writer can never cease to be grateful, especially as it came to him at that time, like a ray of light beaming upon the pathway of a benighted traveller.]

Under that arrangement the office was conducted until the 1st July, 1829, when SIMEON CUMINGS was appointed in place of Mr. CARY. The same arrangement, however, was made with Judge CUMINGS as with Mr. CARY, and thus the Office continued to be kept by the writer, until the 22d of July, 1836, when Judge CUMINGS resigned, after having held his commission seven years, and WILLIAM SEAVER was appointed Post Master in his stead.

His first commission was from AMOS KENDALL, then Post Master General, but in consequence of a law being passed by Congress, July 2d, 1836, requiring that at all the Post Offices where the emoluments exceeded one thousand dollars per year, the Post Masters should be appointed by the President and Senate, and in 1837 the emoluments of this Office having come up to that amount, Mr. SEAVER was re-appointed, for four years, by the President and Senate, on the 13th of April, 1838. His last commission expired on the 13th of April, 1842, and he neither asked nor expected its renewal, under the change of Administration, which took place on the accession of Gen. HARRISON to the Presidency. No appointment was made, however, until about five months after the commission had expired, when it was conferred on LEVANT B. COTES, into whose hands the Office was surrendered on the 6th of August, 1842.

Thus it will be seen that Mr. SEAVER discharged the duties of Post Master from the 13th of January, 1823, to the 6th of August, 1842—a term but little short of twenty years, and a position seldom occupied by one individual for so great a length of time. But as we do not propose to become our own eulogist, it is left for those familiar with our “administration” to judge of the manner in which our public duties were performed.

Dr. COTES having been appointed by President TYLER, took the office on the 6th of August, 1842, as above stated, and held it for about one year, when President TYLER appointed FREDERICK FOLLETT in his place. This last appointment was made during the interregnum of the Senate, but previous to the meeting of that Body, it was discovered that the emoluments of the Office had so far diminished as to bring the appointment under the Post Master General's jurisdiction, and Capt. FOLLETT's appointment by

the President, was consequently not submitted to the Senate for ratification. He was at once commissioned, however, by Post Master General WICKLIFF, and under that appointment he, *at this present writing*, still retains the Office.

We now return to 1802, for the purpose of showing the growth of the village, the settlement of the country, and also its political character.—The most authentic information on these points is contained in a letter from JOSEPH ELLICOTT to SETH PEASE, Esq., dated Batavia, 15th May 1802, as follows:—

“As you were acquainted with this part of the country before any settlement took place, it may not be altogether uninteresting to be informed of the number of votes given in at this village last election, for Members of Congress, which will be some data to form an opinion of the progress of settlement.

“OLIVER PHELPS, Esq., Republican, 50 votes.

“NAT. W. HOWELL, Esq., Anti-Republican, 1 vote.

“In this County, (Genesee,) in consequence of the sparse settlements, not more than one third of the people could with any convenience attend the election polls, therefore we only voted 133, of which 117 were Republican and for OLIVER PHELPS, and the residue for NAT. W. HOWELL, so that it appears this county may be styled Republican.”

Without dwelling on further particulars, we pass to 1803. The most memorable events of that year were, the organization of the County, and the holding of the first Court. The first Court was held in the new Court House, June 14th, at which Term RICHARD SMITH, Esq., was admitted as an Attorney and Counsellor. The next Court was held November 8th when DANIEL B. BROWN, Esq., was admitted.

On the 18th of June, 1803, DAVID E. EVANS came to reside with his uncle, JOSEPH ELLICOTT, as a Clerk in the Land Office, and still remains as one of our most distinguished citizens.

During that year, BURT and STODDARD erected a small framed building on the ground between the *Keyes House* and the *Brisbane House*, where they opened the second Store in the village. [That building was subsequently removed to near the spot where JOHN KINYON's store now stands, and was destroyed by fire early in 1822.]

The year 1804 seems not to have been distinguished by any very important event, except the finishing of the Grist Mill, and that was not completed until December.

Previous to that time, all the breadstuff for the settlers was procured East of Genesee River, and brought here on pack-horses; from which circumstance it may well be supposed that the “staff of life” was not at all times on hand, as the following instance, related to us by Mr. EVANS, will serve to illustrate.

In November, 1804, JOSEPH ELLICOTT was appointed an Elector of President and Vice President of the United States, and the Electoral College was to meet at Hudson, early in December. He accordingly started for Hudson the latter part of November, taking Mr. EVANS with him; but that which renders the event particularly vivid in his recollection is the fact, that for several days immediately preceding their departure, not a morsel of bread had been seen in the village. High and low, rich and poor, were in the same predicament, so that no one envied his neighbor on that score. There was plenty of pork and potatoes, but as to the staple article, not even a "Joigny Cake" could be procured in the whole settlement. With breadless stomachs therefore, the Elector and his Nephew started on their journey, but fortunately for those they left behind, a man was met in the woods, between Stafford and LeRoy, having two pack-horses loaded with flour. Mr. ELLICOTT at once purchased the "cargo," and having despatched it to the destitute Batavians, went on his way rejoicing in the anticipation of soon luxuriating in the land of plenty, to which he was approaching.

When they returned from Hudson in December, the Grist Mill was in full operation, and since that time, so far as we can learn, Batavia has never been destitute of a loaf of bread.

The years 1805 and 1806 appear to have been unproductive of any very remarkable events; we therefore pass them over by simply reminding the reader, that up to the time of which we are now writing, and probably to a still later period, a great portion of the present most central and compact part of our village, was then a swamp, or low wet land, sometimes called a frog-pond, and that the ground on which the Genesee House stands, together with a small piece on the opposite side of the street was called "*The Island*."

By way of illustrating the peculiar attractions of this 'Island' and swamp, the late DANIEL B. BROWN, Esq., was fond of relating the anecdote, that not long after STEPHEN RUSSELL had enlarged his Tavern, (to which we have previously alluded,) on the "Island," some travellers, of whom two were ladies, put up at that House for the night. It being a warm and pleasant evening in the Spring, precisely such an one as frogs delight to celebrate with their nocturnal songs, that innumerable "*subterranean*" choir poured forth their loudest notes, from the "thorough bass" of original masculine Windhamites, up to the shrill pipings of their degenerate offspring. After listening for a while to this unearthly melody with which the whole surrounding forest resounded, one of the ladies exclaimed, "Well, if I was destined to spend my days in Batavia, I should at once pray to *Jupiter* to turn me into a Frog!"

But the scene is changed. That 'Island' has lost its identity—the swamp has arisen from its lowly bed, like the lion when he "shakes the dew-drops from his mane," and its submarine inhabitants have been driven before the

march of civilization, until scarce a descendant of that innumerable host is left to cheer our waking hours with his matin notes, or lull us to repose with his evening song.

We now bid the frogs of 1806 adieu, and pass on to 1807. The first thing which claims our notice in that year is the establishment of a *Printing Press* in this village, the first ever seen West of Genesee River. To give the best account of that establishment, together with a continued history of the *Press* in this village up to the present time, we quote from the 'History of the Press in Western New York,' prepared by FREDERICK FOLLETT, Esq., at the request of a Committee appointed at the Printers' Festival, in Rochester, in January, 1847.

[That part of the History which relates to Genesee County, was published in the Spirit of the Times in December, 1846, but in order to carry out our present object, we deem it proper to re-publish in this connexion, so much of it as relates to the village of Batavia.]

MR. FOLLETT says:—"The first paper printed in the County of Genesee, was established at Batavia, then, as now, the County Seat, in the spring of 1807. At the date, or near it, indicated below, I addressed a letter to BENJAMIN BLODGETT, Esq., asking information in relation to the early history of the Press in this County. I received the following letter from him, and I cannot do better justice to the subject than by copying the letter entire. It is as follows:—

"PEMBROKE, Nov. 25, 1846.

"FRIEND FOLLETT:—I this morning received your note asking information of the 'rise and progress of the Art of Printing,' in this County. I regret that I am not able to give you a more minute account. Not having preserved a file of my old papers, I have to depend merely upon memory. The first paper established in this County was in the spring of 1807. ELIAS WILLIAMS purchased in Manlius, an old *Ramage Printing Press* that had been laid aside as useless, and a box of *old type in pi*, intended to sell as type metal, and brought them, in the winter of that year, to Batavia. After a laborious winter's work of assorting his old type, and patching up the old press, he published the first number of a paper called the 'Genesee Intelligencer.' This paper was printed upon a half sheet of Medium size, with a subscription list of 100, and two or three columns of advertisements from the Holland Land Company, one Elopement, and one runaway apprentice Boy, for whose apprehension a *bag of bran* was offered as a reward. This was all the advertising patronage, if my recollection serves me right, that the paper commenced with. The paper was a sorry looking thing—the mechanical execution being so bad that it would have puzzled a Philadelphia Lawyer to find out what it was. I ought to have preserved a copy—it would be looked upon by the craft at this day, not only as a literary but a mechanical curiosity. WILLIAMS, becoming disheartened at the shabby appearance of his paper, and about to fail for the want of funds,



induced me to go into partnership with him. Anxious to see my name at the head of a newspaper, as Printer, Publisher, and *Editor*, too, of the 'Genesee Intelligencer,' I embarked my all of this world's effects in the enterprise, which amounted to the vast sum of *forty-eight dollars and seventy five cents*, the hard earnings of the summer before, as *Pack Horseman* and *Cook* to a Company of Surveyors on the Holland Purchase—a pursuit better fitted to my capacity at that day, than *Editor* to the 'Genesee Intelligencer.'

"About the first July, 1807, the firm of WILLIAMS & BLODGETT resumed the publication of the 'Intelligencer,' with an increased subscription list and advertising patronage. After publishing 13 numbers, WILLIAMS went to Alexander to attend a Military Review, and has never since been seen or heard of in this country. This unceremonious leave-taking of WILLIAMS put a mighty damper upon the prospects of Mr. *Editor* BLODGETT, who instead of realizing the golden dreams he had anticipated, found himself involved in debt about \$300, flat on his back with the fever and ague, which continued about six months without intermission; and for the want of help, not being a practical Printer myself, was obliged to abandon the publication of the 'Intelligencer.' However, in the spring of 1808, I rallied again, and in company with a man by the name of PEEK, I started the 'Cornucopia,' (a very classic name,) with an enlarged sheet and new type, under the firm of PEEK & BLODGETT, with a subscription list of about 300. In the fall of 1811, PEEK was taken sick and died, and with his death the 'Cornucopia' went down.

"I then, under the mechanical superintendence of DAVID C. MILLER, (afterwards Colonel, with his little cane and breeches,) commenced the publication of the 'Republican Advocate,' with a new Press and new type, and continued its publication for several years, when I sold out to Colonel MILLER, who became sole proprietor of that paper.

"Your friend, BENJAMIN BLODGETT."

"This was the first paper ever established, I believe, which was called the 'Advocate.' Since that time, however, many a bantling has sprung into existence bearing that cognomen.

"The 'Republican Advocate' continued in the hands, and under the direction of Col. MILLER, until April, 1828, when he took into copartnership CHARLES SENTELL, by whom it was conducted until July, 1829, when it passed into the hands of CHARLES W. MILLER, and was continued by him until the 21st November, 1831, when he died. The paper was continued without any acknowledged proprietor, until the 17th January, 1832, when it passed into the hands of EDWIN HOUGH and ANDREW W. YOUNG, the latter gentlemen having been engaged in the publication of the 'Warsaw Sentinel.' On the 13th November, 1832, HOUGH left the establishment in the hands of YOUNG. On the 8th April, 1835, YOUNG transferred the office to LEWIS & BROWN, who continued the paper for *three weeks*,



and then it reverted back again to Mr. YOUNG. The establishment was then sold to C. C. ALLEN, who continued its publication for *four weeks*, when *he* surrendered the establishment to Mr. YOUNG again. YOUNG printed a half sheet to give the paper an existence, and then, on the 8th of June, 1835, sold out to WAITE & COOLEY. This copartnership continued until the 16th September, of the same year, when COOLEY retired from the establishment, leaving it in the hands of Mr. WAITE, by whom it is still continued.

"On the 3d day of February, 1819, the first number of the 'Spirit of the Times,' was issued at Batavia, by ORAN FOLLETT, on which occasion the writer of this made his first attempt at type setting. The 'Times' was continued by the same proprietor until May, 1825, when FREDERICK FOLLETT purchased the establishment of his brother, and was duly installed Editor and Proprietor, and continued as such until August, 1836, when being fired by an extra love of liberty, and desiring to participate in the struggle then in progress in Texas, sold the establishment to a number of gentlemen, and repaired to the country of the 'lone Star.' The establishment was then placed in the hands of NELSON D. WOOD, who continued at its head until the writer's return, who, on the 17th of August, 1837, again found himself at the head of the 'Times,' and continued in that capacity until the 11th of June, 1840, when the 'Times' passed into the hands of LUCAS SEAVER, who continued its publication until the 28th of January, 1845, when he disposed of it to WILLIAM SEAVER & WILLIAM A. SEAVER, by whom it is still continued under the firm of WM. SEAVER & SON.

[On the first of March, 1848, WILLIAM A. SEAVER transferred his interest in the 'Times' establishment, to his Brother JAMES E. SEAVER, who thus became one of the firm of WM. SEAVER & SON, and by whom that establishment is still conducted.]

"The 'People's Press,' owned by an association of individuals, and printed by BENJ. BLODGETT, was commenced in the village of Batavia, in 1825, and was continued by Mr. BLODGETT for about a year, when it passed into the hands of MARTIN, ADAMS & THORP. Soon after, Mr. MARTIN retired from the establishment, leaving it in the hands of ADAMS & THORP. Another change soon after took place, and the establishment passed into the hands of ADAMS & McCLEARY. The paper was afterwards merged in the 'Spirit of the Times,' and finally its name has become extinct.

"The 'Morgan Investigator' was the title of a small paper published at the office of the 'Republican Advocate,' soon after the excitement of 1826 broke out. It was continued about a year and then expired. Its title is a sufficient indication of the purposes of its origin.

"The 'Masonic Intelligencer' was also started about the same period, and for purposes directly the reverse of the former. It was published at the office of the 'Peoples' Press.' It attained about the same age.

"On leaving the office of the 'Spirit of the Times,' June 11th, 1840, the writer of this, in connection with PETER LAWRENCE, who until that time had published the 'Farmers' and Mechanics' Journal,' at Alexander, commenced, in the village of Batavia, the publication of the 'Batavia Times and Farmers' and Mechanics' Journal,' the first number of which paper was issued on the 18th day of June, 1840. LAWRENCE continued in the establishment for two or three months, when the writer took the establishment into his own hands, and continued its publication until the 20th of September, 1843, when the 'good will' of the establishment was disposed of to LUCAS SEAVER, who was then the proprietor of the 'Spirit of the Times.'

"The 'Temperance Herald' was the title of a small paper printed by LUCAS SEAVER, and issued from the office of the 'Spirit of the Times.' The first number was issued in March, 1842, and was continued for one year. It was devoted, as is implied by its title, to the cause of Temperance."

"Having gone through with an enumeration of the different Newspapers established in this town for the last forty years," Mr. FOLLETT says, "my task may be considered as ended. But what has become of the founders of those establishments? The inquiry is an interesting one, and it may not be wholly unprofitable to give the answer.

"ELIAS WILLIAMS, the Pioneer of the Newspaper Press in this town, as has before been stated, left the field of his early labors in a most abrupt and unceremonious manner—and, as stated, has never since been seen or heard of in this town. Whether he was spirited away, by some of the evil geniuses, who in early times were associated with the Craft in the minds of the vulgar or uninformed—or whether he was actuated by a more noble and magnanimous principle, and "left his country for his country's good," is really more than I can say. It however had been suggested to us by his old partner, that the reason why WILLIAMS thus made himself scarce about these parts, was this—Previous to the review in question, both proprietors of the 'Intelligencer,' (Printers are celebrated for their military propensities) were elected Corporals of a Company in Batavia, and on repairing to Alexander to be reviewed, WILLIAMS thought, especially as it was the bounden duty of military men to fight, that he would get up a little bit of a row—and as it generally happens in such cases that somebody must get licked, the lot fell, unfortunately, upon WILLIAMS. Having got most essentially thrashed out—both eyes put in mourning for the sins of the inner man, we suppose, he decamped. One thing, however, is certain—WILLIAMS has left an interregnum in his history which it is impossible for me to supply, and I am therefore compelled thus to leave his name wrapped in mystery and doubt.

"BENJAMIN BLODGETT, the next in order as the pioneer of Printing in this town is still living. After catering for many years, for the appetite of the reading public, he abandoned the printing business, and commenced catering for the traveling public. Who that has travelled on the great thoroughfare to

Buffalo, before the introduction and completion of the iron roads, does not remember the "*Richville Cottage?*" It was a frequent remark of travellers that at no place between Albany and Buffalo, did they fare so well or so bountifully, as at the 'Cottage;' and this was kept by our old friend BENJAMIN BLODGETT, who still resides at Pembroke, and I hope he may long continue in the enjoyment of the blessings of this life.

"SAMUEL PEEK died in this Village, in the fall of 1811, while engaged in the publication, with BLODGETT, of the 'Cornucopia.'

"DAVID C. MILLER. It cannot be denied but what MILLER possessed a very considerable degree of talent, and a reasonable share of shrewdness. All will remember the conspicuous part he bore in the exciting times which followed the abduction of WILLIAM MORGAN, in 1826. MILLER was afterwards elected County Clerk, took the stump as a candidate for Congress, was defeated, and finally left, in 1832, or '33, cursing the party, or its leaders, as guilty of ingratitude. The last intelligence of this man located him at Cleveland, Ohio.

"ORAN FOLLETT continued the publication of the 'Spirit of the Times,' until 1825, when he sold out. In the fall of 1824, he was returned a Member of the Legislature from this County. After disposing of the 'Times,' he united with DAY & HASKINS in the publication of a paper at Buffalo. From thence he removed to Sandusky City, Ohio, where he now resides, and is President of the Board of Public Works of that State.

"FREDERICK FOLLETT, his successor in the publication of the 'Times,' continued it from 1825, until 1840, with an interruption of one year—then published the 'Times and Journal,' until 1843—since which time he has been serving the public in the capacity of Post Master of the village of Batavia.

[In a former part of our "Sketch," we stated "*at that present writing,*" that Mr. FOLLETT, retained the office of Post Master. We now have to state that his head has been brought to the block by the new Post Master General, and that CHARLES E. FORD is appointed in his place.]

"ANDREW W. YOUNG, is still living. He resides at Warsaw, in the county of Wyoming. Since leaving the Printing business Mr. YOUNG has turned author, and his work upon the 'Science of Government,' designed for a School Book, has met with an extensive sale, and is deservedly popular. Mr. YOUNG has been twice elected to the Legislature from Wyoming, and was returned a member of the late Convention to revise the Constitution of this State, from the same County.

LEWIS & BROWN. The former gentleman is the editor of a paper in Marshall, Michigan, where he has resided for some years. Mr. BROWN, I believe, is also printing a paper in Michigan.

C. C. ALLEN prints the 'Sciota Gazette,' at Chillicothe, Ohio, and if the appearance of the paper indicates anything, he is doing well.

"DANIEL D. WAITE still presides at the head of the 'Republican Advocate,' and unlike his predecessors in the Printing business in Batavia, by good management and strict economy, has been able to sustain himself respectably, and lay by something for a rainy day. I certainly rejoice at this, although it is unlike the luck of Printers generally. We hope his case may always be full.

"E. A. COOLEY, who was at once concerned in the publication of the 'Republican Advocate,' and who afterwards published a paper in Attica, Wyoming county, is now publishing a paper at [Elk Horn] Wisconsin.

"DANIEL P. ADAMS, for some time one of the publishers of the 'Peoples' Press,' like too many of the Craft, belongs to that order of men whose pilgrimage through life seems always to be 'up hill.' Honest and industrious, he makes a good living. After leaving Batavia, he published a paper at Black Rock. He is now a journeyman in Buffalo.

"JOHN THORP, another publisher of the 'Peoples' Press,' went to New Orleans, and fell a victim soon after, to the prevailing fever of that region.

"DAVID C. McCLEARY, who was also at one time the Editor of the 'Peoples' Press,' now slumbers with the silent dead. Mr. McCLEARY was a young man of no ordinary talent. He was an easy and forcible writer, and had he lived, would have become conspicuous among the writers of the age. But his health was always feeble, which finally compelled him to abandon the active duties of life. He repaired to the home of his childhood, in Vermont, but it was only to mingle his ashes with those who had preceded him in the drama of life. His death was universally regretted. He was a brother-in-law of Col. WILLIAM SEAVER, of this village, and now the senior Editor of the 'Times.'

"PETER LAWRENCE, originally of the 'Farmers' and Mechanics' Journal,' and afterwards associated with FREDERICK FOLLETT in the publication of the 'Times and Journal,' is now the Editor of the 'Perry Democrat.' Mr. LAWRENCE is a rare genius—full of humor, wit, and jovial good feeling—a fast friend and an unflinching enemy. Like too many of the same profession, he is satisfied with doing well, without attempting to do better.

"LUCAS SEAVER. It is far more difficult to speak of the living than the dead. The subject now under consideration is, in every sense of the word, a living one. He was, in years gone by, an apprentice in the office of the writer, and for that reason, if for no other, I feel that I am privileged to speak with freedom. With warm and generous impulses, misfortune never appeals to him in vain, and he too often permits these impulses to displace from its seat the trite, but too frequently neglected adage, 'charity begins at home.' He is firm in his friendship—jovial, kind-hearted and generous in his intercourse with his companions; firm, manly, and unflinching in his walk through life thus far. I can only hope in his case, and this hope is extended to all of whom I have spoken, that his case may always be



*full*—that he may never *run out of sorts*, and when the last *token* shall be *finished* and the *form locked up* for its final transition, he, with them, may be *distributed* among the great *font* of the blest, without a *monk* or a *friar* to mar the beauty of their last *page*."

[He now has a Printing Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is about to establish a Daily Paper.]

Having traced the Newspaper Press up to the present time, we now go back to 1807, but as this sketch has already grown to a length exceeding our original anticipations, and as there are yet many interesting facts to detail of later date, we shall pass hastily over the years 1807-8, in which very little of importance is discoverable, except that the Village and adjacent Country improved rapidly, and that many valuable and enterprising people, some of whom still remain, came in to swell the tide of business and population.

In the spring of 1808, Mr. BRISBANE resumed the Mercantile business in his old Store, which had been occupied in his absence by EBENEZER CARY, and the latter moved his Goods and Post Office into the Burt and Babcock Store, (made vacant by their failure in 1806,) until his own store and dwelling was erected in 1809, and which is the wood building now standing next east of S. Grant's Store. BRISBANE and CARY continued the only Merchants in town until 1810, when EPHRAIM HART built a store on the ground now covered by the stores of Smith & Warren, and Wm. H. Wells & Son, where he opened quite an extensive establishment, which was managed by CLARK HEACOX, a man of extraordinary business capacity, who now resides in Buffalo.

#### RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

We now proceed to give a brief account of the Religious Societies in the Village, taking them in the order of their organization, and tracing them separately to the present time. This account however, will, in some particulars, be meager and imperfect, particularly in regard to the Congregational Society, in consequence of the loss of some of its early records.

For several years after the first settlement of the Village but little attention seems to have been paid to religious matters, except that religious meetings were occasionally held by pious Laymen, and also at irregular intervals by itinerant Preachers.

#### THE CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

The first organization of a Society, at least so far as there are any records, was on the 19th of September, 1809. On that day, as stated in the record, "A regular Meeting was held at the Center School House in this place, this afternoon, agreeable to previous notice being given, for the purpose of forming a *Congregational Church*. The Rev. ROYAL PHELPS, a Missionary from the Hampshire Missionary Society in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts presided, and officiated in the transactions of the day.

We spent the meeting with a Sermon adapted to the occasion, from Joshua 24th Chap. 15th Verse, 2d Clause."

"The following persons then came forward and offered themselves to be Incorporated into a Church of Christ in this place, according to the rules of the Gospel, viz: Silas Chapin, David Anderson, Ezekiel Fox, Solomon Kingsley, Eleanor Smith, Elizabeth Mathers, Elizabeth Peck, Esther Kellogg, Hulda Wright, Patience Kingsley, Esther Kingsley, Polly Branard."

"They were then severally examined with regard to their views of doctrinal and experimental religion, and after obtaining satisfaction and knowledge of their christian faith and sincerity, they also professing satisfaction in each other, the Articles of Faith, and Church Covenant, were administered to them, and they were pronounced a Church of Christ, according to the rules of the Gospel. Miss ESTHER KINGSLEY not having been Baptised, had the Ordinance of Baptism administered to her, previous to the Church being Organized. The meeting was concluded with solemn prayer to God."

Attest, ROYAL PHELPS, Missionary.

On the 24th Sept., 1809, the Rev. ROYAL PHELPS preached at *Jesse Rumsey's Barn*, and "administered the ordinance of the Lords Supper." This was probably the first time that holy ordinance was ever administered in this place.

#### INCORPORATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

On the 5th of Feb., 1811, a public meeting was held at the Court House agreeable to previous notice, for the purpose of organizing a Congregational Society, in conformity with the Statute passed in 1801, providing for the Incorporation of Religious Societies.

After appointing Deacon BENJAMIN PORTER, Moderator, and LEMUEL FOSTER, Clerk, the meeting then elected EBENEZER CARY, EBENEZER SEYMOUR, and BENJAMIN PORTER, "to serve as Trustees of the same congregation, to be denominated and known in Law by the name of the *Trustees of the First Congregational Society in the Town of Batavia.*" The record was attested by the Moderator and Clerk, in presence of Silas Chapin, Ebenezer Seymour, and Edmund Badger, acknowledged before Benjamin Ellicott one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, and recorded by Simeon Cumings County Clerk.

By reference to the old Records, we discover that after the organization of the Church by Rev. Mr. PHELPS, the following Missionaries officiated in the Society, irregularly and at long intervals—Rev. REUBEN PARMELE, twice in 1810 and twice in 1811; Rev. JOHN SPENCER, once, Rev. JOHN ALEXANDER, once, and Rev. Mr. ANES, once in 1812; Rev. Mr. BLISS, once in 1813; Rev. Mr. SWIFT, once in 1814; Rev. Mr. HANNING, 3 times in 1815; Rev. Mr. SWEETZ, once in 1816, and Rev. Messrs. SQUIRES, BLISS, COLTON, DUVEL, and CHAPIN, once each in 1817.

On the 23d of January, 1818, a call was presented to Rev. EPHRAIM CHAPIN, who thereupon became the first regularly settled Minister of the congregation, and continued to officiate as such until January 1822, when he was succeeded by Rev. CALVIN COLTON, who engaged to officiate *one half* the time for one year. At the close of 1822 Mr. COLTON was hired for another year, and on entering upon his new engagement, he at once determined to make an effort for the erection of a Meeting House, and on the 10th of January 1823, a subscription paper was drawn up, to raise the necessary funds. The efforts of Mr. COLTON for this object, aided by a few energetic individuals, were soon crowned with success, and on the 25th of February, 1823, contracts were executed between the Trustees and BENJAMIN ALLEN and THOMAS McCULLEY, for the building of the present Meeting House, for \$3,574,00, to be completed by July 1st, 1824. The work was immediately commenced, and completed within the time specified. A bell was also procured weighing about 1000 pounds, and which was cast in this village, by JAS. COCHRAN.

The *Trustees* under whose supervision the House was built were BENJ. PORTER, SAM'L HALL, and WM. H. WELLS, who were succeeded on the 15th September, 1824, by WM. H. WELLS, WM. SEAVER and JONATHAN LAY. This last election was at a special meeting to re-incorporate the Society, it having become dissolved by neglecting to choose its officers within the prescribed time. Again for the same neglect, a re-organization of the Society took place on the 20th of December, 1825, when WM. SEAVER WM. H. BUSH, W. J. WOOD, WM. H. WELLS, ROBERT RICHMOND, and S. D. GREENE, were chosen Trustees. At this meeting it was "Resolved, That the Trustees be authorized to petition the Legislature of this State to have the name of this Society altered from that of the 'First Congregational Society of Batavia,' to the 'First Presbyterian Church of Batavia.'" The Resolution was never carried into effect, and consequently the Society retains its original title.

[It may here be noted that in consequence of the loss of the old Society Books the proceedings of the meeting last mentioned above, are the first which now appears on the Records of the Society.]

Mr. COLTON continued to officiate as Pastor of the Church until June 1826, when he resigned, and the pulpit was supplied by Rev. Messrs. HUNTER, SPENCER, WHITEHEAD, SMITH, BRINING, and THROOP, until about the first of January, 1827, when Rev. CHARLES WHITEHEAD was called to the Pastoral office. Mr. WHITEHEAD resigned his charge in December, 1827, and the Rev. RUSSELL WHITING was called in his place, who, it appears from imperfect Records, remained until some time in 1832, when he was succeeded by Rev. CHARLES FITCH. Rev. SILAS BROWN succeeded Mr. FITCH in 1835, and continued until November 7, 1836, when Rev. E. J. GILLETT was elected Pastor. Mr. GILLETT remained between two and three years, and was succeeded by Rev. WM. H. BEECHER, who was called

to the Pastoral office on the 30th of May, 1839, and remained until June or July, 1843. Soon after Mr. BEECHER's connexion with the Society ceased, the Rev. BYRON SUNDERLAND was invited to fill his place, and after having officiated about one year, he was, on the 20th July, 1844, regularly "called to be ordained as Pastor," and as such he still remains, to the great satisfaction of his congregation. The present Trustees are P. L. TRACY, JACOB WILLIAMS, JOHN SPRAGUE, JOSEPH CLARK, ELIAS FOOT, and L. B. COTES.

We have taken great pains to search out and gather from scattered fragments, the foregoing facts, and though some errors may be discovered, it is believed that the statement is nearly correct so far as it goes.

#### THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The first time Religious Services were ever performed in this Village according to the ritual of the Episcopal Church, so far as we have been able to discover, was in the spring of 1815. By reference to the Journal of the Diocesan Convention of that year, we find it stated in Bishop HOBART's Report, that the Rev. ALANSON W. WELTON had spent "three Sundays at Batavia," and the date of those "Sundays" appears upon the original Records of the Church, which fortunately are still preserved, and are now before us, and to which we shall now refer.

#### INCORPORATION OF ST. JAMES' CHURCH.

On the 6th day of June, 1815, "a meeting of several of the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, inhabitants of the town of Batavia," was held "in the Court House in the said town, in pursuance of notice for that purpose given in the time of morning service, on two Sundays preceding that day, and in compliance with an act to provide for the incorporation of Religious Societies. The Rev. ALANSON W. WELTON being called to the Chair—*John Hickcox* and *Samuel Benedict* were chosen Church Wardens; and *Richard Smith*, *Isaac Sutherland*, *Isaac Spencer*, *John Z. Ross*, *Chauncey Keyes*, *David C. Miller*, *Aaron Van Cleve*, and *Oswald Williams*, were chosen Vestrymen; and at the same time it was unanimously Resolved, That Monday in Easter week hereafter be the day for the annual election of their successors, and that the said Church be known and distinguished by the name of *St. James' Church* in Batavia." The Record was certified by the Chairman, and S. CUMINGS and TRUMBULL CARY, in presence of SAMUEL RISLEY and ISAIAH BABCOCK—acknowledged before D. McCracken, one of Judges of Genesee County Courts, and Recorded by SAMUEL LAKE, Deputy County Clerk.

It would seem that the subject of erecting a Church Edifice was immediately agitated after the above act of Incorporation, for at the *first Meeting of the Vestry*, which was held "at Hickcox's Inn, in the Village of Batavia, on Saturday, July 1st, 1815, after appointing RICHARD SMITH, Clerk, it was Resolved, That Isaac Sutherland, John Z. Ross, and Chauncey Keyes, be a Committee to wait on the Agent of the Holland Land Company, to ascer-



tain what aid may be obtained from the said Company towards the erection of a Protestant Episcopal Church, in the Village of Batavia, and that the said Committee report at the next meeting of the Vestry." The meeting adjourned to the 15th of July, at which time the Committee reported, "that in behalf of the Holland Land Company, the Agent would make a donation towards the erection of a Protestant Episcopal Church, if of Wood, of One thousand Dollars, and if of Brick, of Fifteen hundred Dollars."

Again, at a Meeting of the Vestry, at Hickcox's Inn, (which was in the South part of the Court House,) a Committee consisting of Aaron Van Cleve, and Isaac Sutherland, was appointed "to wait on the Agent of the Holland Land Company, and to ascertain what Site may be obtained for the Church proposed to be erected in the Village of Batavia, with a plan of the ground, and to report at the next Meeting of the Vestry." At another Meeting, October 21st, 1815, Isaac Sutherland was appointed "to superintend the erection of a Brick Church in the Village of Batavia, with power to make contracts for Brick and other materials, and that he be allowed a reasonable compensation for his services." At the same time Richard Smith was appointed Treasurer, and Chauncey Keyes, and Isaac Spencer, Collectors," with power to receive all monies subscribed for the erection of St. James' Church. It appears, however, that Maj. Sutherland declined acting as superintendent, and that on the 12th Nov., he, together with Oswald Williams, were appointed a Committee to recommend some suitable person in his place. Who that person was, does not appear on the record.

The Vestry set about collecting money, materials, &c., and contracted with David Canfield, and Thomas McCulley, then of Schenectady, to do the mason work, who, on the 10th of April, 1816, broke ground and commenced the erection of the Church.

The annual election for 1816, was held on the 15th of April, when the following persons were chosen :

JOHN HICKCOX,	} Wardens.
SAMUEL BENEDICT,	
ISAAC SUTHERLAND,	} Vestrymen.
JOHN Z. ROSS,	
EBENEZER MIX,	
DAVID C. MILLER,	
CHAUNCEY KEYS,	
LIBBEUS FISH,	}
OSWALD WILLIAMS,	
RICHARD SMITH,	

Under the supervision of this Board, the erection of the Church was prosecuted, and the walls were finished, and the roof put on in Sept. or Oct. of that year. At that stage of proceedings, the Vestry having exhausted all its available funds, were obliged to abandon the work, and in that condition the building was suffered to remain until the Spring of 1822.

Up to that time we find nothing worthy of mention, except that in August or September of 1815, Bishop Hobart visited the Parish and officiated in the Court House—that the Rev. Alanson W. Welton, officiated ten times in 1816—the Rev. Henry U. Onderdonk, once the same year, and twice in 1817, in exchange with the Rev. SAMUEL JOHNSON, who, in the Journal of

the Convention of that year says, "I arrived in Batavia the 16th October, and agreeable to directions, devoted the most of my Missionary labors there," "I have officiated twenty Sundays in Batavia, \* \* exchanged with the Rev. Orin Clark, who has performed Divine Service for me one Sunday at Batavia," and further that "The Rev. Alanson W. Welton, under whose assiduous labors the Church in Batavia was planted, officiated one day, and administered the Holy Communion"—[This is the first record extant, of the administration of this Sacrament in St. James' Church.]

It may here be remarked that no Parish Register appears to have been kept, from the Organization of the Church up to 1823, and also that the records of the election of Wardens and Vestrymen for the years 1820, 1821 and 1822 are lost. The only record in 1822 is, that a Vestry meeting held June first, adopted "the silver seal made by Joseph Davis, as the seal of this corporation." (That seal is still in use.)

It is unfortunate that the record of 1822 was not preserved, because that was an important year in the history of the Church, and the names of the Wardens and Vestrymen under whose auspices the Church was finished, ought to have been perpetuated on its records. We discover, however, that the following composed a majority of the number, as they appear on the record of a Vestry meeting held December 12, 1822, (viz:) *Oswald Williams, Warden; John Z. Ross, William Davis, David E. Evans, Daniel H. Chandler, and Richard Smith, Vestrymen.*

It has already been stated that the Church, erected and covered in 1816, was suffered to remain in an unfinished state until 1822. Early in that year it was resolved to make an effort for its completion, and an arrangement was made with TRUMBULL CARY and WM. DAVIS for them to go on and finish it, holding the Church as security, but relying on the sale of Pews and Slips, for prompt payment. Under that arrangement, the Church was promptly completed, and the same summer the Rev. LEVI S. IVES, (now Bishop of North Carolina,) was invited to minister at its Altar.

A debt of between four and five thousand dollars having accrued for finishing the Church, (exclusive of the sum originally paid for its erection in 1816,) thirty-two members of the Parish came forward on the 28th August 1822, and subscribed to the amount of \$5,100 for the purpose of liquidating the same, each subscriber being entitled to receive the amount of his subscription in Pews and Slips.

On the 7th of April 1823, the Vestry appointed NATHAN FOLLETT and DANIEL H. CHANDLER, a committee to contract with JAMES COCHRAN for a *Church Bell*, to weigh 800 pounds, and to pay him for the same \$300, and a Slip in the Church valued at \$75. A contract was accordingly made, and the Bell, cast by Mr. COCHRAN in this village, still hangs in the Tower of St. James. It has already tolled the funeral knell of many who aided in placing it there, and may ere long sound the requiem of the last of that

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The Rev. Mr. IVES continued his ministrations until about the first of July 1823, when the Rev. LUCIUS SMITH was invited to supply his place, and who, on the 18th of August following, was duly elected *Rector* of the Church.

In 1825, the Vestry, through the agency of DAVID E. EVANS, TRUMBULL CARY, SILAS FINCH, and EBENEZER MIX, procured of *Hall & Erben*, New York, the Organ now in the Church, at an expense of \$1,350.

We now pass on to 1833, with the single remark, personal though it is, that the writer of this sketch having connected himself with this Church early in 1828, became a member of the Vestry, on the 15th April 1830, and from that time to the present, without intermission, has been a member of that Board.

In August 1833, the Rev. LUCIUS SMITH resigned the Rectorship of the Church, to take effect on the first of October, and from that time for nearly one year, Religious Services were chiefly conducted by Rev. JOHN F. ERNST, who was then the teacher of a select school in the Village. On the 24th June 1834, the Vestry invited the Rev. JAMES A. BOLLES, to become the Minister of the Parish, who ultimately consented to the proposition and entered upon his engagement on the first of September following.

For some time previous to this, the old Brick Church had become so defective as to create a desire for one more safe and substantial, and that sentiment continued to increase until the spring of 1835, when it was resolved to tear it down and build a new one of Stone; and on the 16th March, Daniel H. Chandler, John S. Ganson, and Walter M. Seymour, were appointed a committee to obtain subscriptions for that purpose.

The following persons were elected Wardens and Vestrymen, April 20, 1835, (viz:) William Seaver and Joel Allen, Wardens; David E. Evans, Trumbull Cary, Frederick Follett, Daniel H. Chandler, John S. Ganson, Nathan Follett, Walter M. Seymour, and Timothy Fitch, Vestrymen.— This Board, after appointing Frederick Follett, Clerk; William Seaver, Treasurer; Harriett Hull, Organist, and Wm. Preston, Sexton, passed a resolution appointing "Nathan Follett, Timothy Fitch, and William Davis a committee to superintend the building of the contemplated *new Church*," and if at all practicable, that it should be completed during that year, together with a *Parsonage House*.

Sufficient funds having been subscribed (including the materials of the old Church, which the contractors received in part payment for the new one,) a contract was made with Thomas McCulley to do the mason work, and Thomas J. Hoyt, the wood work of the new Church and Parsonage, including Barn and Out Houses, appurtenant thereto. The original contract for the whole was \$9,660. (To McCulley \$4,866, and to Hoyt \$4,794,) to this was added for extra work \$348, which made the total amount \$10,508,00.

Sundry other expenses were incurred about the establishment, so that when the whole was completed, near the close of 1835, the entire cost was not far from \$12,000. The slips were sold in the Church, at public auction on the 27th of January, 1836, by WM. SEAVER, who was appointed by the Vestry to make the sales, and, also, to execute Deeds for the same. It should be noted that the new Church was erected on the same ground covered by the old one, and that the original Lot, together with a quantity of land sufficient for the Parsonage house, garden, &c., was given to the Church by David E. Evans, Esq. It is also worthy of mention, that in addition to the land, and a munificent subscription of \$1500, Mr. Evans presented the splendid chandeliers, now suspended in the Church, which cost in New York, where they were manufactured to order, \$525. Trinity Church, New York also, made a donation of \$1,000, and it would give us pleasure to record the very liberal subscriptions of every member of the Parish, but we fear our notice is already too much extended.

To show the large amount expended by this Parish for church purposes, and also, to illustrate the disastrous effects of bad building, it should furthermore be stated, that in consequence of the imperfect construction of the roof to the new Church, it had stood but about six years, when the entire roof with the ceiling over head had to be removed, and replaced with new, at great expense and trouble. In 1842 a *Gallery* was erected in the Church, (there having been none in the original plan,) at an expense of more than \$600.

We close our notice of this Church by simply remarking, that it is now nearly free from debt, that the Rev. Mr. BOLLES, after a ministration of nearly fifteen years, still remains its highly acceptable Rector, and that the following compose the present Vestry, (viz:) *William Seaver*, and *Trumbull Cary*, Wardens; *Benjamin Pringle*, *John S. Ganson*, *Nathan Follett*, *Wm. H. Wells*, *John H. Martindale*, *Junius A. Smith*, *H. U. Soper*, and *C. R. Ganson*, Vestrymen.

#### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The earliest information respecting the origin of that Church in this place, together with many other particulars in regard to its progress, we derive from Mr. THOMAS McCULLEY, who took up his residence here in the spring of 1816, and from that time to the present, has continued one of the most active and prominent members of that Communion.



Although it is recollected by several, that religious services were occasionally performed in the village at quite an early day, by Circuit Preachers, we are unable to learn the names of those who first officiated, or the first organization of a *Class*. The earliest date of which there is any written memorandum, is in 1816, when it appears that the Rev. Mr HARRIS and the Rev. Mr. EMMETT, were stationed on this Circuit. In 1817, Elders DAVIS, and O'FLING, were stationed on it, and in 1818, it was supplied by Elder MICAH SEAGER, and Elder FOSTER. (Elder Seager still continues in the ministry, and now resides in Byron.

#### INCORPORATION OF THE CHURCH.

On Wednesday, Dec. 15th, 1819, a meeting was held at the Court House in this village, agreeable to previous notice, for the purpose of organizing a Methodist Church under the Law of 1813, and the Rev. ELISHA HOWSE presided, assisted by JEREMIAH BENNETT. On that occasion THOMAS McCULLEY, SAMUEL F. GEER, JEREMIAH BENNETT, SEYMOUR ENSIGN, and SILAS HOLLISTER, were elected Trustees of the "Congregation to be denominated and known in Law by the name of the Trustees of *The First Methodist Episcopal Church in Batavia*. The Record was witnessed by C. CARPENTER, and J. W. C. COFFIN; acknowledged before RALPH COFFIN, Commissioner &c., and Recorded by R. C. SMEAD, Dep. Clerk. [Mr. Smead, then Dep. Co. Clerk under his Uncle Simeon Cummings, was subsequently educated at West Point, joined the Army as Lieut. of Artillery, was promoted to a Captaincy, did good service in Florida, bore a gallant part in the late war with Mexico, and returning with his Command, which was among the last to leave that Country after the peace, he was attacked with Yellow Fever on his passage home, of which he died soon after his arrival.]

After this organization, nothing worthy of note up to 1823, appears to have occurred, except that Elders PADDOCK, and BECKWITH officiated here in 1820, HALL, and Paddock, in 1821, GILMORE and Bennett, in 1822, and ORCUTT and BAGGERLY in 1823. The society having increased in numbers, and there being no convenient place for meetings, it was resolved to make an effort to erect a *Chapel*, and on the 26th of May, 1823, a subscription paper was drawn up, and a sufficient amount raised to warrant the undertaking. Joseph ELLICOTT made the largest subscription, which was \$250, cash, and a Lot upon which to erect the Chapel, valued at \$250.

In consequence of previous neglect, it now became necessary to re-incorporate the society, and for that purpose a meeting was held "at the West School House in the Village of Batavia, being the place where the Congregation steadily attended for Divine worship, on Monday the 16th day of June 1823." Rev. JOHN ARNOLD presided, assisted by Thomas McCulley; when Amherst Crane, Phinchas Silsby Samuel F. Geer, Silas Hollister, and Libeous Graves, were duly elected Trustees.

This Board of Trustees, on the 23d of June 1823, contracted with Thomas McCulley, Joseph Shaw, and Seymour Ensign, for the building of a Stone

Meeting House "to be 40 feet front and rear, 45 feet deep, and 26 feet high." McCulley was to do the mason work for \$762. Shaw, the out-side carpenter and joiner work for \$511, and Ensign, the inside joiner work, for \$400. Subsequently Shaw assumed Ensign's contract, and he and McCulley went on and promptly completed the building, at an ultimate cost, including extras, of about \$2,800. That building, known as the "Stone Chapel," was several years since disposed of by the Methodist Church, and having passed through several private hands, is now in charge of Mr. MOSES SAVERCOOL, as Trustee of the Freewill Baptist Society. That society is now dissolved, as we are informed, and the building, now unoccupied, is verging to decay.

The location of the Stone Chapel was never considered a favorable one, and as time rolled on and the Society increased, so the desire increased for a more central location, until at length, in 1841, it was resolved to build a new Meeting House. Accordingly, on the 26th of January of that year, a subscription was opened, and a sufficient amount raised to accomplish the object.

On the 10th of May, 1841, a contract was executed between Joel Ranney, Onis Page, Benjamin C. Page, Thomas McCulley, and John Lowber, as Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Jonathan Hutchins, and Henry S. Hulin, as builders, for the erection of a Meeting House, to be of wood 60 feet deep, 40 feet wide, and 22 feet high, to be completed by the last of Dec. following for the sum of \$1900. This was exclusive of the stone foundation, subscribed to be built by Thos. McCulley at an estimated value of \$150, and when the whole was finished the entire cost, including the lot given by John Lowber, and the foundation walls by Mr. McCulley, was about \$3000. It is a plain, neat structure, very conveniently situated on Jackson street, and is kept well painted and in good repair, as all churches should be. It is called *St. John's Church*.

Since the erection of the new church nothing remarkable has transpired in its history, further than that the Society is out of debt and going on prosperously. We close our notices of this Church by enumerating its present officers, as follows:

Philo Woodworth, Preacher in charge; Alva Smith, John Dorman, Wm. H. Davis, Robert G. Butler, and Eben. B. Morgan, Trustees; John Dorman, Chester White, Thos. McCulley, Chauncey Kirkham, E. B. Morgan, Stephen Tuttle, and Asa Flint, Stewards; Robert G. Butler, Wm. H. Davis, Stephen Tuttle, and John Lowber, Class Leaders.

#### BAPTIST CHURCH.

As this Church and Society is of comparatively recent origin in this place, its history lies within a narrow compass,

By reference to the original Record we find that a meeting was held at the Court House on the 19th of November, 1835, "for the purpose of originating said Society according to Law." On that occasion GIDEON KENDRICK, and P. S. MOFFIT, were chosen to preside at the meeting. It was

next "votedt hat this Society be called the *Baptist Society of Batavia Village*," and Richard Covell jr., John Dorman, Wm. Blossom, Wm. D. Popple, and Calvin Foster, were elected its first Trustees.

At the time the Society was organized in 1835, the Rev. J. Clark was employed as its first pastor, and the present Meeting House, on Jackson Street, was built the same year. Having been unable to obtain any record respecting the *Building*, we can merely state from our own recollection, that it was erected by T. J. Hoyt and Thomas McCulley, and that the Lot upon which it stands was presented to the Society for that purpose, by Wm. D. POPPLE.

In 1836, the Rev. WM. W. SMITH succeeded Elder CLARK, and continued until 1839. In February, 1840, the Rev. S. A. ESTEE took the spiritual charge of the Society and remained until May, 1842. The next regular Pastor was Rev. GIBBON WILLIAMS, who entered upon his Ministerial engagement in August, 1844, and remained one year.

In September 1845, the Rev. S. M. STIMSON was called to the Pastoral office, and still remains the popular minister of the Society.

In 1847, the Meeting House was extensively and thoroughly repaired, and its whole internal arrangement changed, so as to render it very pleasant and commodious. When this Church was formed, the number of the communicants was 24; it is now 175.

The present Trustees of the society, are John Colman, Onan Dustin, Samuel Churchill, John B. Holton, Wm. Blossom, and B. Buzwell.

#### BIBLE SOCIETY.

Having closed our notices of the Churches, it will be appropriate to introduce the first movement in this place, in regard to the formation of a Bible Society, the original record of which has been preserved by Thomas McCulley, and is as follows:

"At a meeting of a number of the Inhabitants of the town of Batavia, pursuant to previous notice, for the purpose of forming a department of the Genesee County Bible Society, convened at the Brick School House in the Village of Batavia, on the 5th of April 1819, when the Rev. Mr. CHAPIN was appointed Moderator, and Thomas McCulley Secretary.

"The object of the meeting being disclosed by E. B. ALLEN Esq., they proceeded to nominate Officers for this department when the following gentlemen were duly elected.

EPIHRAIM TOWNER, Chairman.

THOMAS McCULLEY, Clerk.

PARMENIO ADAMS, Treasurer.

URIAL SPENCER, Collector.

LEMUEL FOSTER, AMHERST CRANE, AHIMAZ BRAINARD, THOMAS McCULLEY, Distributing Committee.

Adjourned to the last Tuesday in December next.

Again we go back to notice a few things of an early date which were omitted in their order.

The first physician who located in this place was Doct. DAVID McCracken, who came here in 1801, and took up the lot or rather two lots of 40 acres each, on the south side of Main Street, being that which is now bounded west by Jackson street, north by Genesee Street, east by Liberty Street, and extending south to Tonawanda Creek. It was then a dense forest, but now a central and most valuable portion of the village.

The Doctor erected a log House on the ground now covered by the dwelling House of Mrs Otto, directly oposite the American Hotel, and for many years was the most extensive and popular practitioner in this region. He was a Physician of the old school, and what he lacked in medical science was in a measure compensated by an ample supply of natural endowments. Possessing a fine personal appearance, great conversational powers—affable and familiar in his manners, these, together with a ready wit, ingenuity, and peculiar tact of inspiring in his patients courage and confidence, contributed in no small degree to render him one of the most conspicuous personages in the early history of this locality.

After living several years in the log house Dr. McCracken built a small frame dwelling on the ground upon which Gen. E. B. Allen subsequently erected the noble mansion now occupied by his widow and son-in-law, Gen. I. A. Verplanck. Some twenty years since, the Doct., having disposed of his property in this place, removed to Rochester, where he died.

Doct. Town, the Father of Mr. Norman Town, settled here not long after Dr. McCracken, but survived only four or five years.

In 1810 or 11 when rumors of war began to agitate the country, our public authorities looking forward to such an event as by no means improbable, and seeing the exposed condition of this frontier, determined to make some preparation for its defence, and to erect a Depot at this place for the storage of Arms and other munitions of War. In pursuance of this determination, a contract was made by the State with Joseph Ellicott to erect an *Arsenal*, (so called) and which soon after appeared in the shape of a building about 20 feet square and 12 feet high, made of hewn logs, and situated above the mill, on the opposite side and near the bend of the creek, on the Alexander Road.

That building answered all the purposes intended, until about the close of the war, when the large stone Arsenal now standing at the west end of the village, was erected by the State, under the supervision of Maj. Isaac Sutherland, and the old log Arsenal, once emblazoned with the implements of war and trophies of victory, was degraded to the ignoble purpose of a Distillery.

For several years after the settlement of the village, Merchant's Goods were sold at what would now be considered an enormous price. As a proof of this, and to show the difference between the past and the present, we



will state one fact derived from reliable authority. Those familiar with the Land Office will recollect the immense maps of the Holland Purchase, which were mounted on double rollers, and turned back and forth in their cases by means of cranks. Those maps when originally constructed were pasted upon *calico* to preserve them from injury. It took about 40 yards for the whole, which, in the language of our informant was of the coarsest kind, dark brown ground, interspersed regularly with round white spots.— It was strong, but of the texture which old women used to describe as “Grape Vine<sup>3</sup> Warp, filled with Pea-brush and oven-wood.” The price, however, was *one dollar per yard*. The same would be now dear at sixpence.

We now pass over several years, in which nothing is discoverable worthy of note, and will merely stop at 1819, to give our own recollection of the Merchants, Tavern-keepers, Lawyers, and a few others, who were on the stage at that time.

The Merchants were, James Brisbane, Cary & Davis, Jonathan Lay, Wm. H. Wells, J. P. & A. Smith, and W. S. Moore & Co.

Druggists—Hewitt & Billings, and H. Tisdale. Ephraim Towner, Leather & Shoe Store; C. C. Church, Jeweller; Miss. Ann Forbes, Milliner; James Cawte, H. B. Pierpont, and Samuel Mead, Tailors; Nathan Follett, Hatter; Wm. Keyes, Hinman Holden, Horace Gibbs, Mrs Leonard, and Joseph Baker, Tavern-Keepers; Richard Smith, Daniel B. Brown, P. L. Tracy, Ethan B. Allen, T. C. Love, C. Carpenter, Lawyers; D. McCracken, Ephraim Brown, John Cotes, Winter Hewitt, John Z. Ross, Physicians; Simeon Cummings, Saddler; Thos. Bliss, Cabinet & Chair Maker; E. Towner, and Oswald Williams, Tanners.

The first meet market in this village of which we have any information, was established by Mr. Folsom, in 1819, where the Eagle Tavern now stands.

The first regular *Book-Store* in Town, was opened in Jan. 1819 by Oran Follett, simultaneously with the ‘Spirit of the Times’ printing establishment. It was in a two-story wood building subsequently called the *Recess*, on the ground now covered by the “*Ganson Block*,” on the North side of Genesee street. The upper story was occupied by Mr. Follett as a Printing office, under which was his Book Store, and directly below, in the basement, was a Grocery kept by Wm. R. Thompson. That building was afterward consumed by the great fire which destroyed the Gibbs Tavern, (where the Genesee House now stands) and all the intermediate buildings. How long Mr. Follett continued the ‘*Batavia Book Store*’ we are not certain, but think it was disposed of to HENRY TISDALE, who opened a Book Store in a wood building directly west of Cary & Davis, (now S. Grants Store) on the 11th of Oct. 1820.

The first *Fire* of any material consequence that ever occurred in the village, was on the night of the 22d Dec., 1821. It originated in a build-

ding situated on the lot next West of where J. Kenyon's store now stands, and was thus described in the 'Spirit of the Times.' "The flames were discovered to proceed from a block of buildings occupied as stores and shops on the north side of Main Street, and exhibited to the agitated minds of our citizens a scene terrible and alarming in the highest degree: the destructive element was raging with the greatest fury in the heart of our village, and a prospect almost inevitable of the fairest portion of it being laid in ashes. The fire had made such progress before it was discovered, as to forbid all attempts to save the buildings situated on either side of Mr. L. Baker's Silversmith shop where it is supposed the fire originated. The active exertions of the citizens were turned to prevent it extending its ravages to the adjacent building. The struggle was long and doubtful, but the cool and deliberate action of a few individuals, favored by the stillness of the night, and the constant pouring of water over the sides of the exposed buildings, accomplished at last what the most sanguine hardly dare hope.

"Mr. Gibb's dwelling house on the west, (on the corner of Main and Mechanic's St.) and the Grocery Store of Mr. Davis at the east, (where the building next east of John Kenyon's Store now stands) were situated but a few feet from the buildings burnt, yet they were saved with no other means than the use of buckets. The injury they sustained is trifling.

"The destruction of property is of considerable amount. Three buildings destroyed. One of them was occupied by Messrs Moore & Finch as a Dry-goods store and owned by Mr. Horace Gibbs. Another by L. Baker as a Silver-smith shop, also owned by Mr. Horace Gibbs. The other was occupied by Mr. James P. Smith, Merchant, Charles C. Church, watch-maker. The upper part was occupied by D. C. Miller Esq., as the *Advocate Printing Office*, which was totally destroyed. The building was owned by Messrs. F. & T. Palmer. Mr. Miller is Probably the greatest sufferer in this dreadful calamity, having lost the whole of his printing apparatus, list-books, accounts &c.

"The amount of property destroyed may be estimated at about \$10,000. The greatest amount was consumed in the building occupied by Messrs. Moore & Finch, but it gives us pleasure to state, that their loss, between 5 & \$6,000 was covered by an insurance.

The fire thus described, and which at the time produced a deep sensation, gave the first impulse towards procuring an Act Incorporating the Village. For this purpose a meeting of the citizens was held on the 23d of June, 1822, and a committee consisting of Silas Finch, Wm. H. Wells, and Trumbull Cary, was appointed to petition the Legislature for such act of Incorporation. A petition was accordingly presented to the Legislature then in session, but for some cause it failed of success. At the next session it was renewed, and on the 23d of April, 1823, a *charter* was granted.

The first meeting of the inhabitants in pursuance of this Act of Incorporation, was held at James Ganson's Tavern, June 3d, 1823. C. Carpenter, and D. Tisdale, Justices of the Peace presided, at which time the following persons were elected officers for the first year, viz:

DANIEL H. CHANDLER,	} Trustees.
DAVID E. EVANS,	
NATHAN FOLLETT,	
SIMEON CUMMINGS,	
SILAS FINCH,	
TRUMBULL CARY, Treasurer,	
PARLEY PAINE, Collector.	

On the 14th of June the Trustees appointed Daniel H. Chandler President of the corporation, and Oliver G. Adams Clerk. Silas Finch and Nathan Follett, were appointed Assessors, Simeon Cummings, Superintendant of streets and side-walks, and Robert P. Betts, Pound keeper.

The Trustees at once adopted various salutary municipal regulations, and the village soon began to exhibit manifest improvements, particularly in regard to streets and side-walks. Measures were also adopted in regard to Fires, but for want of means to purchase an Engine, no Fire Company was organized until the 20th of April, 1824, at which time an ordinance was passed establishing one, to consist of the following members (viz:)

William Seaver, jr., Captain—Hinman Holden, Daniel H. Chandler, Frederick Follett, Wm. Purcell, Parley Paine, Oran Follett, Wm. Platt, Daniel Gates, Ralph Stiles Hezekiah D. Platt, Wm. Dickinson, Charles C. Church, Nathan Follett, Walter M. Seymour, Norman Town, Wm. R. Thompson, Benjamin Allen, Stephen Grant, Nahum Loring, John S. Moore, Jonathan Lay, Horace Gibbs, David M. Gardner, Rufus Burnham.

Of this company which consisted of 25 men, seven still reside in this village, eight are known to have died, and the remainder have removed to various parts widely separate, of whom Mr. Gibbs, now in California, is the most remote. Long has the original members of that company ceased to assemble at the alarm of the "fire bell," but a day is approaching when the sound of a trumpet louder than that of the Captain, will reach their ears, and call them to meet again as we hope, in "that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

It would probably be uninteresting to trace the corporation through its existence for 26 years, up to this time; we will therefore let it suffice to give a list of the Presidents, and the present officers.

#### PRESIDENTS OF THE CORPORATION.

Dan'l H. Chandler, 1823; Wm. Keyes, 1824; Johnson Goodwill, 1825; Charles C. Church, 1826; Hinman Holden, 1827 and 1828; Simeon Cumings, 1829; Frederick Follett, 1830 and 1831; Nathan Follett, 1832; Daniel H. Chandler, 1833; Augustus C. Stevens, 1834; Simeon Cumings, 1835; Nathan Follett, 1836; William Seaver, 1837; Timothy Fitch, 1838; Benjamin Pringle, 1839; Frederick Follett, 1840; Edgar C. Dibble, 1841; Ira

Belden, 1842; James D. Merrill, 1843; Lucius A. Smith, 1844; Junius A. Smith, 1845; Nathan Follett, 1846; James D. Merrill, 1847; Joseph Clark, 1848; Hinman Holden, 1849.

The present officers of the corporation, for 1849, are, Hinman Holden, Rufus Robertson, M. Wells Hewitt, Corneal R. Ganson, and Frederick Follett, Trustees; Wm. S. Mallory, Seth Wakeman, and Benjamin C. Page, Assessors; Alvin Pease, Constable and Collector; Branon Young, Treasurer; Augustus Cowdin Clerk.

We will now recur to 1822 for the purpose of noticing an extraordinary trial and conviction that took place here, and which is not generally known, except to the older inhabitants.

A man by the name of Farnsworth was arrested in this county, and committed to prison, on the charge of having *forged United States Land warrants*, and a *U. S. District Court* was ordered to be held for his trial. The Court was accordingly held in this village in July 1822 by the Hon. Roger Skinner District Judge, and Jacob Sutherland Esq. (subsequently one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of this State,) acted as U. S. District Attorney.

The complaint was laid before a full and very intelligent Grand Jury, who, after due investigation, presented a true Bill, and upon which, Farnsworth was immediately arraigned and put upon his trial. The cause was ably managed on both sides, Gen. Ethan B. Allen acting as Counsel for the Defendant, and after a patient investigation, in which the Indictment was fully sustained, the Judge, having given a strong charge against the prisoner, committed his case to the Jury, who soon came into court with a verdict of *guilty*. *Death* was the only penalty "known to the laws" for such an *atrocious* (!) offence, and accordingly poor Farnsworth was *sentenced to be hung* on the 20th day of September following.

Gen. Allen immediately forwarded a petition to the President of the U. S. for a Pardon or Reprieve of the Culprit, but on what particular ground the application was predicated we are unable to state. Meanwhile time flew swiftly on, and at length the fatal day arrived which was to terminate his mortal career. Thousands upon thousands, actuated by that morbid curiosity which such tragical scenes always inspires, flocked to the village "to see the dear creature suffer;" when, lo! to their utter chagrin and disappointment, it was announced that the President had suspended his execution for six months.

It would be amusing to relate the loud and bitter complaints with which our streets rang against the President, for thus thwarting their expectations, and "arresting the course of justice!" and so determined were many not to leave town without at least a glimpse of the "monster," that it was said, (though we will not vouch for its truth) that the Turnkey, unbeknown to the Sheriff or Jailor, unable to resist their importunities, and willing also to make an honest penny, brought Farnsworth out, seated him on the platform



at the north door of the old Court House, which at that time was hid from public view by a high board fence, and admitted them into this jail yard through the back gate, at a shilling a head, to see the show.

The sequel will show the extraordinary character of this transaction, and that the whole matter from beginning to end, was little better than a solemn farce. No sooner had the President (Mouroe) taken time to examine the case, than it was at once discovered that Farnsworth had violated no law of the United States, and that his trial and conviction was wholly unjustifiable, there being no Statute recognizing as an offence the act with which he was charged. In short the result was, that the President granted a free pardon to Farnsworth, and ordered his discharge from custody.

Passing rapidly on we come to the "*Morgan Affair*," (so called,) one of the most extraordinary and lamentable events with which the history of Batavia is connected.

It is not our purpose to detail that foul transaction, for the reason that innumerable tongues and pens have already been employed to give every shade and feature of it the most ample notoriety. It will be sufficient therefore to state briefly, that on the 11th September 1826 a man by the name of WILLIAM MORGAN, then residing in this village, who, in conjunction with David C. Miller, it was said was about to disclose the secrets of Freemasonry, was arrested and conveyed to Canandaigua on a criminal warrant issued by a magistrate of that place, predicated upon a complaint against him for stealing some trifling articles.

Having been acquitted of that charge, he was immediately arrested again and put in jail, for a debt of about \$2. It appears that during the same evening, he was discharged from prison, secretly forced into a close carriage, and driven with great caution and speed from Canandaigua by way of Rochester and Lewiston to Fort Niagara, from whence no *positive* trace of him has ever been discovered. His sudden and mysterious disappearance, taken in connection with prior circumstances growing out of his threatened exposition of Masonry, soon created a violent presumption that he had fallen a victim to a portion of the Masonic fraternity. This gave rise to a most vigorous, long continued, and searching investigation which resulted in satisfying the public mind generally, that Morgan had perished by the hands of certain members of that Fraternity and that his body had been sunk in Niagara River or Lake Ontario. Search was accordingly made there for his remains, but without success, and the place where it rests is still veiled in mystery.

It may be interesting here to state an extraordinary circumstance connected with this search, and which at the time produced an intense excitement.

In Oct. 1827, about eleven months after the abduction of Morgan, and when further search for him seemed hopeless, the dead body of a man was discovered on the beach of Lake Ontario near the mouth of Oak Orchard

Creek, supposed to have been drowned and washed ashore. An Inquest was held, the body examined, and no one recognizing it, or suspected anything but a case of accidental drowning, it was quietly buried and the clothes in which it was found preserved.

As the abduction of Morgan was then universally known, and as it was generally supposed that he had been deposited in Niagara River or Lake Ontario, an idea was conceived that the body just found might possibly be his, and such was the feverish state of the public mind, that no sooner had the suspicion found utterance than rumor with her thousand tongues spread it abroad magnified into indubitable truth, that 'Morgan was found.'

So firmly was it believed that Committees from this place and Rochester were sent to make a critical examination, who, after disintering and closely inspecting the body, were unable to make up a decided opinion without first obtaining a minute description of Morgan from those more familiar than they, with his personal appearance. The committee from this place accordingly returned and after closely questioning some of his most intimate friends, at once decided from indubitable evidence that it *was not* the body of Morgan. Such a decision however, did not suit the views of certain designing men, who, for political purposes, had determined, right or wrong, to make it "a good-enough Morgan until after election," and accordingly the body was again exhumed and brought to this village with no small parade, as the veritable remains of Morgan.

On arriving here it was first placed in the yard in front of James Brisbane's present dwelling house, where, for several hours it was exposed to public gaze, and large numbers (among whom was the writer) visited the spot to view the loathsome spectacle which scarcely retained a single lineament of humanity. It was a scene well calculated by the chief manager (D. C. Miller) to produce an effect upon the populace, and furnished an admirable opportunity for reenacting the part of Mark Anthony over the dead body of Cæsar. After this, a funeral procession was formed, Mrs. Morgan being the chief mourner, and the body was conveyed to our village grave yard, where it was deposited, and where it still moulders.

Meanwhile a report of these events having reached Niagara, it was there recollected that several weeks previous, a man by the name of TIMOTHY MONROE was drowned at the mouth of Niagara River, and from the description, it was believed that the body found at Oak Orchard might be his. A message to that effect was sent to his widow then residing in the vicinity of Toronto, who at once came on in hope of discovering the remains of her husband. In the first place she was rigidly questioned as to the clothes worn by him when drowned, and without seeing them, the very minute description which she gave, corresponded so exactly with the clothing and the body found at Oak Orchard, that not a doubt remained upon unprejudiced minds of its identity as that of her husband.

This discovery, according to our recollection, was soon after the Body had been removed to this place; at all events, to settle the question of identity, a further examination was resolved upon, and accordingly a Coroners Inquest was held at the Court House in this village, Mrs. Monroe being present, and after again examining the body, and going through with a long and tedious examination of witnesses, the Jury determined that it was Timothy Monroe, and not Wm. Morgan.

Thus was that grave question disposed of in accordance with truth and public opinion; but it by no means gave quiet to the public mind, or atoned for the guilt of Morgan's abduction; on the contrary it seemed to give a fresh impulse, not only to more vigorous efforts to discover the guilty, but also for the entire overthrow of the Masonic Institution. Hence the origin of the "Anti-Masonic Party," and a continuance of those legal investigations which for three years occupied the attention of our Courts in several of the western counties.

A quarter of a century has nearly elapsed since the perpetration of that act of wickedness and folly, and the bitterness of feeling which it engendered through all the ranks of society has subsided, and we would not now call it to mind, even in this brief and imperfect manner, did it not constitute one of the most prominent and notorious events with which Batavia was ever connected.

We pass on to 1833, which was a calamitous year for the village in consequence of two destructive Fires. The first occurred on the 4th of March, and is thus described in the "Advocate" of the following day:

"At about two o'clock yesterday morning our citizens were alarmed by the cry of fire! It was first discovered in a wooden building on Main street, near the corner of Jackson street, occupied by a *Billiard Recess*. Before the flames could be subdued, this building was consumed, together with one on the west side, occupied by Mr. Wm. Manley as a saddler's shop, and two small ones on the east side, the one occupied by G. C. Towner Esq. as a Law Office, and the other by Mr. Wentworth as a Shoe Shop. The progress of the fire was arrested by pulling down two small buildings on the west side of those consumed. The goods and contents were all saved except the furniture of the *Gamblers Retreat*. Whole loss estimated at \$1500 to \$2000.

Severe as was this fire, it was soon followed by one far more destructive, and which laid waste a wide space in one of the most central parts of the village. It occurred on the 19th of April, 1833, and was described as follows in the Advocate of April 23rd.

"Between one and two o'clock on Friday morning last, our citizens were again aroused by the cry of fire! It originated in one of the small wooden buildings nearly opposite the Eagle Tavern. It spread with great rapidity along Main street, until its progress eastward was arrested, though with difficulty, at the intersection of Mechanic street, and westward by the new three-story Arcade Buildings erected by A. Champion of Rochester.

The following buildings were destroyed. The Tavern-House at the corner of Genesee and Mechanic streets, together with its appurtenances, occupied by Harvey Rowe, and owned by Messrs. Lamberton and Hurlburt. Mr. Rowe's goods and furniture were principally saved. Loss of buildings, about \$1200.

An unoccupied building, owned by Joseph Wilson, which was fitting up for a grocery, valued at about \$300.

A small building occupied by R. Blades as a Tailor's shop. Loss of building about \$150. Some of Mr. Blade's goods and furniture were destroyed.

A building owned and occupied by Joseph Wilson as a grocery, together with most of the goods. Loss about \$500.

The Store of Messrs. Sherman & Crandall, occupied by them as a Dry-Goods and Book Store, and Book Bindery, most of the goods were saved. Whole loss about \$2,000.

A building owned by William Dickinson, and occupied by J. T. Allen, Watch-maker and Jeweller, and Messrs. Gilbert & Seward, Tin and Sheet Iron manufacturers. Mr. Dickinson's loss \$400; Mr. Allen about \$100.

A small building owned by Mrs. Ross, occupied by Hugh Evans as a grocery and Bakers shop, valued at about \$100.

A two-story building, owned also by Mrs. Ross, and occupied by W. P. Goldsmith as a Tailors shop; Charles Seward as a dwelling; E. C. Dibble, Attorney at Law, and Doct. L. B. Cotes, as a Druggist Store. In the basement story was a grocery, kept by Caleb Allen. Building estimated at \$800, insured \$300. A share of the loss is sustained by G. W. Allen, to whom the building was leased for a term of years, and who had fitted it up and rented it to the present occupants.

Although the number of buildings was considerable, yet as will be perceived, some of them were not of very great value. The aggregate loss of buildings is estimated at about \$4000. There has, however, been some considerable other loss, but to what amount we are unable to state."

In continuation of the calamities with which Batavia has been visited, we pass on to notice the tremendous conflagration which occurred on the 30th of May 1834. We have witnessed many fires in city and town, and when large amounts of property have been destroyed, but this was decidedly the most furious and terrific. It took place in the afternoon of a hot summers day, everything combustible being exceedingly dry, the wind blowing strong from the southwest, and so suddenly were the two large Hotels in flames that all hope of saving them immediately vanished.

The fire company (under the direction of the writer) was instantly on the spot, with the notable little Fire Engine called "Triton," and ready to battle the devouring element. That Engine, the pioneer of its species in this place, could only be worked by six men at a time, three on each crank, like turning a grind-stone, and its effect on that fire was about equal to a pewter syringe on the crater of Mount *Ætna*.



No sooner had the flames caught the roofs of the lofty Hotels, than burning shingles were driven by the gale to great distances, and lighting on the roofs even as far east as Liberty street, threatened destruction to almost the whole village. Such probably would have been the case, had not the wind after about half an hour, suddenly chopped about to the northeast.— So great was the danger that large numbers were obliged to leave the immediate scene of action in order to protect their own property, and there was scarcely a roof for a long distance on the north side of Main street that was not more or less on fire. We now proceed to give a more particular account by quoting from the "Advocate of June 3d, 1834.

"APPALLING CONFLAGRATION AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY!

The most destructive fire ever known in this county, broke out in this village on Friday last, about 5 o'clock P. M. It was first discovered in some combustible materials near the barns and stables connected with the *Eagle Tavern*. The out-houses were quickly one mass of flame, and being situated near the Eagle Tavern, it was found to be impossible to prevent the destruction of that noble edifice, and soon the devouring element was seen bursting in large volumes from its windows. A gentle gale was blowing from the south west nearly in the direction of Genesee street, which caused the flames to expand along the line of buildings on the south side of that street with alarming rapidity, and to progress in that direction in spite of every effort to avert them, till every building was a blazing heap of ruins from the Eagle Tavern to Mr. Latimer's house near the corner of Jackson street, where, by indefatigable and persevering efforts of the Fire Company, the march of the destroyer was at length stayed.

The fire extended south from the Eagle Tavern along Court street to Mr. Wood's blacksmith shop on Bigtree street. The spectacle presented by the conflagration was truly appalling. The following estimate of the number of buildings destroyed, the amount of Insurance, loss &c. on each, will be found nearly correct.

Genesee street—B. Humphrey's Eagle Tavern, estimated loss of buildings, barns, sheds &c. \$10,000. Insured \$7,000.

Tavern house occupied by H. Rowe, and owned by A. Champion of Rochester, no insurance. Loss \$3000.

Taggart & Smith's Law Office, no insurance. Loss \$300.

Jones & Leech, tailors shop, owned by M. Taggart Esq., no insurance. Loss \$200.

Law Office and dwelling house, owned by T. Fitch Esq., no insurance. Loss \$1,200.

Building owned by E. B. Seymour, and occupied by Mr. Buxton as a Cabinet shop, by Gilbert & Seward as a Tin Factory, and by T. Cole as a tailor's shop. Insured \$300 Loss of building \$600.

Dwelling House owned by Mrs. Hewett, no insurance. Loss \$800.

Dwelling house owned and occupied by Richard Smith Esq., no insurance. Loss \$400.

Allen & Chandler's Law Office.

Dwelling house owned by E. B. Allen, and occupied by Mr. Ottoway, and Wm. Fursman. Loss \$1000.

Two small buildings, one occupied as a grocery and the other as a dwelling.

*Court Street.* Two dwellings owned by H. & E. C. Kimberly. Loss \$600.

Barns and sheds owned by A. Hosmer. Loss \$500.

*Big-Tree street.*—Two dwelling houses owned by Jesse Wood. Loss \$900. Insured \$500.

Considerable furniture and other property were also destroyed, of which it is impossible to form an estimate.

The whole number of buildings, including dwellings, barns, &c. is about 25. Aggregate loss of property, it is supposed cannot be less than \$30,000."

This was altogether the most disastrous fire which ever occurred in this place and its effects were long and seriously felt. A large number of people were almost instantly rendered houseless, and one short hour was sufficient to lay in ruins a very large, central, and most conspicuous portion of the village.

Severe as had been these disasters, following each other in rapid succession, it yet remained for another visitation of the same character, before the waste places of former devastations had been built up. It occurred the 8th of Nov. 1837, on the north side of Genesee Street, embracing the block of buildings between Mechanic's Hall and John Kenyon's present grocery store, and from its central position threatened a more widespread destruction than had yet been experienced. Fortunately, however, the evening was calm to which circumstance may be attributed its comparatively limited scope. The following brief account of it was published the following day in the "Spirit of the Times."

**FIRE.**—On Wednesday evening between 6 and 7 o'clock our citizens were alarmed by the cry of fire! It was soon ascertained to be in the rear of a building owned by Mr. Wm. Blossom, and occupied as a dwelling by Mr. John Kenyon, which, together with the front or upright part of the building occupied by Misses Vaughns, as a Milliners shop, and Mr. Staniford as a tailor's shop, were entirely consumed. Most of the furniture was saved. Mr. Blossom's loss about \$1,000. Insured for \$500, at the Buffalo office.

The fire then extended East, consuming in its course a Barber's shop, G. W. Allen's Jewelry store, H. Noble's Tailor's shop, and John Kenyon's Grocery and Provision store. The building occupied by D. N. Tuttle as a hat shop, and Isaac M. Joslyn as a Gunsmith shop, was torn down, by which means the ravages of the fire were stayed at Mechanic's Hall.

The Buildings were old and of but little value. Messrs. Allen, Kenyon, and Tuttle, have lost something—how much we cannot say—but they were insured at the Genesee Mutual.

It was a disgraceful sight to see some of our own citizens stand with their cloaks comfortably wrapped around them, viewing the ravages before them, without offering to lift a finger, while others, not residents of the village, without a cent at stake, were laboring hard either to extinguish the fire or save the property of those endangered. Such men should be marked and remembered."

Thus terminates the catalogue of principal fires with which this village has been afflicted. Few places of its size have suffered so severely, and notwithstanding nearly twelve years have elapsed since any serious damage has been sustained from that cause, still longer may it be before an occasion transpires for extending such a record.

The next event entitled to special notice and which constitutes an interesting and important epoch in our history, is what was called

#### THE LAND OFFICE WAR.

This occurred in 1836, and for a time produced almost as much excitement in certain localities, though of a different character, as that of the "Morgan Affair." It was spread more or less over a large portion of the "Holland Purchase," and this village became seriously involved in the disturbance by reason of its being the location of the principal Land Office.

The origin of the difficulty, as we understand it, was briefly this: Early in 1836 certain companies purchased of the Holland company all its unsold lands, mortgages, contracts, &c., indeed, all its remaining interest in these western counties, and immediately instituted a new order of things in reference to the settlers. Previous to this, however, a restive spirit, (engendered as it was said, by certain lawyers, anxious for a fee) had for some time been manifested against the company in reference to its original Title to the lands, so that when the new landlords came in, the settlers were by no means in the most amiable mood towards either the old or the new proprietors.

This state of things did not deter the new owners (or some of them at least) from going forward in the exercise of their legal rights and adopting some new and more stringent measures than had before existed for the collection of land debts, and by way of stimulus to prompt payment, a little addition to the price of the land was also proposed in case the old contracts were not fulfilled. All this had the effect to exasperate many who were directly interested, and their indignation at length broke forth in open acts of violence, intended not only to affect the interests of the new proprietors, but also the old company in consequence of whose transfer the new order of things had been introduced.

In Chautauque and the south part of Erie and Genesec counties the excitement prevailed with more intensity than in any other sections. Large

and enthusiastic public meetings were there held, for the purpose, either by argument or intimidation, of inducing the proprietors to rescind some of their measures and adopt a more lenient system, but as these movements failed of producing the designed effect, open war was declared, and the belligerent forces were marshalled for the conflict.

The first object was to destroy the Land Office at Mayville, and for that purpose a large mob assembled on the night of Feb. 6th, 1836, commenced the grand assault, and without meeting the slightest resistance demolished the whole superstructure, laying it even with the ground. They tore open the vault whose impregnable walls withstood their efforts for three hours, and having collected all the books and papers in one pile on the green, the torch was applied, and they were offered up as a burnt sacrifice to the demon of mobocracy.

Exulting in the complete success of this *brilliant* achievement, the belligerents, taking courage from victory, began to pant for wider fields of glory, and having proved the temper of their "maiden swords" on the Fortress of Mayville, they resolved upon the higher and more chivalrous feat of undertaking to storm and demolish the very citadel of Land Office power at Batavia. Accordingly emissaries were sent in every direction to rouse up all the disaffected forces, and congregate them on a certain night prepared for the grand assault.

Meantime David E. Evans Esq., who then held the Land Office keys, and who had been informed of the transactions at Mayville, was also apprised of the threatened attack at Batavia, but not knowing when the demonstration might be made, he took the precaution to send all the books and valuable papers to Rochester beyond the reach of danger in any untoward emergency. Thus several weeks passed on, and as no hostile movement appeared, the books &c. were brought back and hopes were entertained that the storm would quietly subside. These hopes, however, were of short duration, for the fires of discontent had only been smouldering preparatory to breaking forth with renewed violence.

To give some idea of the feeling which prevailed in the south part of Erie county we quote the language of an agent sent into that quarter, who reported that "all labor is suspended, the whole adult male population meeting at taverns and stores, vowing vengeance against the "land sharks," threatening to burn their houses, and intimating that assassination will be the consequence of attempts to enforce the terms proposed by the new purchasers."

Without dwelling upon further preliminaries it will be sufficient to say that the ferment continued to increase until about the 12th of May, when intelligence was received that a very large mob from the south part of this and Erie counties were gathering, with the avowed determination of marching to this place and tearing down the land office, and the jail, (in which two of their friends were imprisoned) and of committing other depredations on some of our citizens who had become obnoxious to them.



To know that such an attempt would be made was sufficient for our people at once to resolve upon the most firm and united resistance, and accordingly our public authorities both civil and military, aided by the citizens, made immediate preparations to repel the foe. The Land Office was converted into a sort of fortification, well stored with arms and ammunition, and thus matters rested in suspense, not knowing when the attack would be made, until about midnight on the 13th of May, when messengers arrived post haste from Attica and Alexander giving information that the mob was concentrating at the latter place in great force, supposed to be from 700 to 1000, and that it would soon be upon us.

No sooner had this intelligence been received than all the bells in the village rang the alarm, and a general muster of our "fighting" men immediately followed. Videlts were sent out by the sheriff on the different roads, to reconnoiter the enemy, and men were sent to the arsenal for a sufficient supply of muskets to arm all our citizens. Two boxes of ball cartridges of 1000 each were also brought up, one of which was left at the Land Office, and the other taken to the Court House where the sheriff, (Nathan Townsend) who was the commanding officer on the occasion, held his headquarters, surrounded by the "chivalry" of the village ready for the conflict.—What then followed we cannot better describe than in the language of a letter from D. E. Evans, to J. J. Vanderkemp, written soon after the event and from which we are permitted to make the following extracts:

"Our force in the Land Office consisting of fifty men, remained patiently waiting the arrival of the enemy till about sun rise, and none appearing we concluded they had abandoned the enterprise, and we appointed a committee to go to Alexander to ascertain what number had been there and who their leaders were. Col. Seaver, Col. Davis, and myself, (the committee) immediately started, and meeting Mr. Cary near the bridge took him with us. We had proceeded about two miles when we met two of our expresses returning at full gallop, who told us they had just left the mob at Fargo's Tavern, three miles distant, forming in order to march to Batavia. They estimated the whole number at 700, about 400 of which were armed with fire arms, and the residue with bludgeons, crow-bars, and sledge hammers.

Previous to leaving the office I requested Mr. Chandler to remain at it with thirty men, till we either returned or sent him positive information that the mob had dispersed. On receiving information that the mob had really advanced to Fargo's, the committee lost no time in returning, and taking such requisite steps to re-assemble the citizens, most of whom had gone to their respective homes. The mob soon after appeared in sight and halted on the road east of Judge Steven's House, where they were met by Gen. Verplanck, and asked what they wanted? They answered "to right themselves." He asked in what manner? and was answered, "that it was none of his business." He then said it was his duty to inform them that if they committed any outrages in an organized body, upon either public or

private property, they would be fired upon. Some of them then said they wished to have a conference with me, and he promised to inform me of it, and came to the office and did so. I desired him to return and say, that I positively declined having any communication whatever with an armed mob. Their number he estimated at about five hundred men.

Soon after he returned they put themselves in motion, crossed the bridge, marched towards the office, and I supposed we should soon come to blows. After having halted in front of the office, and become sensible that an attack upon it would be attended with danger, it was evident to all spectators that they felt the awkwardness of their situation. After remaining still for a few minutes, four men came under the window in which I was sitting, and requested a conference with me, which I declined, refusing in a peremptory manner to have any thing to do with them, and bid them defiance in no measured terms.

About this time I saw a sudden movement among them which I could not account for, but which I soon learned was occasioned by the, (to them) unexpected appearance of Sheriff Townsend, with 120 men, armed with bright muskets, with bayonets fixed, in full march for the Office. He halted his men in front of my house, and advanced himself with three or four attendants, towards the mob, and was met by several of them. He told them his object in meeting them was to say, that if they attempted to destroy any building in the Village, he should, without any further notice, fire a full volley among them. One of them was proceeding to argue the legality of his doing it, but he cut the matter short by assuring them that he should do it whether legal or not, and advised them to be off very quickly.

They soon after went down the street half a mile, and had a boisterous consultation, some professing to wish to return and attack the Office, but by far the greatest part thought it best to go home. Some forty or fifty continued on westward, and the residue returned as they came, passing the Office without apparently looking at it. The most of them re-crossed the Bridge and went off, but a few lurked about the Village, some of whom were apprehended and committed to prison, and among the number their reputed leader, a man by the name of Hill, a Constable in Holland, Erie County.

As you may readily imagine, our Village remained for several days, in a high state of excitement. The Military were called out, and two Cannons, assigned to Artillery Companys at Le Roy and Bethany, were sent for, and brought to the Village, and strong guards, composed of the Villagers only, were kept at night, as great apprehensions were entertained that the Village would be set on fire by incendiaries, which was threatened by the mob on their retreat, and those threats were reiterated from sections of the Country where we had reason to expect better things. Almost all business was at a stand in the Village, the Country people being afraid to come to it, and the consequence was, the Mercantile men, Tavern-keepers, Grocers, and Mechanics, became apprehensive that the business of the place would go elsewhere.

It therefore became obvious, that either the office must be removed from this place, or some means devised to defend it with a few men, and I determined on erecting two strong block houses, one on the northeast, and the other on the southwest corners. They are made of solid timber from 10 to 12 inches thick, and each armed with thirty muskets, and amply supplied with ammunition, and twelve men in each, would drive a mob of 1000 men from the vicinity of the office in a very short time. I have employed four men as a night guard, with directions to keep three of their number in the Block-houses, and one on the look-out on the out side. I now consider the office secure.

After the mob had taken their departure, and the citizens their breakfast, notice was given that a meeting would be held at the Court House to take measures for the security of the village. At this meeting, Messrs. Wm. Seaver, D. H. Chandler, and myself; were appointed a committee of safety, the duties of which I found vastly more arduous and unpleasant than I imagined. Having received positive information that a considerable number of persons, residents of Chautauque, Erie, and Genesee counties, were passing from town to town, endeavoring to raise another and larger, and in every respect more efficient force than the last, we concluded to lay the case before the Governor, and ask him to issue a proclamation, not that we supposed it would tend to allay the irritation against the new Land Company, but satisfy the malcontents, that the state Government was not friendly to their proceedings, which they had been made to believe. Accordingly we despatched Dr. Van Tuyl to Albany, deeming it advisable to send a person who could give a clear and distinct account of the actual state of the country.

When the Doctor arrived in Albany the Governor was at Saratoga Springs, but returned next day, and very promptly issued the proclamation. He also authorized us to retain the two six-pounders we had, as long as we might want them, sent us two more with a supply of powder and round and canister shot, and several thousand musket cartridges, and authorized us to take two twelve pounders from the arsenal at Canandaigua.

The captain of an artillery company in Bennington, by the name of Norris, having stated that he and his company and gun, a brass three pounder, were ready at any moments notice, to turn out and attack Batavia, we represented the case to the Governor, who immediately directed the commissary General to order Capt. Norris to deliver the gun to the keeper of the arsenal at this place, forthwith. The Capt. was very unwilling to obey the order, pleading as an excuse that the people in his neighborhood would not permit the gun to be taken away but on being threatened to have his delinquency reported to the commissary general, and told that the consequence would be very serious to himself, he concluded to bring it."

Having been apprised of our formidable preparations for a determined resistance to mobocracy, the malcontents were not slow in coming to the

wise conclusion that "prudence was the better part of valor," and all further attempts to attain their object by violent means, was at once abandoned as utterly hopeless.

Thus terminated the "Land Office War," and so far as the people of this place were concerned, it is but justice to say that they acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of all praise. No matter what may have been their individual opinions in regard to the origin of the difficulty, no sooner did they know that lawless violence was about to be committed, and that an infuriated mob, perhaps with the midnight torch, was preparing to invade us, than the fire of '76 kindled in every bosom, and they were prepared to resist, even at the price of their blood, the threatened aggression. As the 'Times' well said, "never before had we witnessed the interesting spectacle of a whole village of peaceful and quiet citizens transformed at the moment, and by a common impulse, from the varied and ordinary pursuits of business into efficient citizen soldiers—all, from highest to lowest, actuated by a common impulse—that of self-defence at any and every hazard." The affair satisfied us by ocular demonstration that there is nothing so potent to quell a mob as *ball and bayonet*, and sure we are that had it not been for a fear of those articles in the hands of our resolute citizens, and a perfect assurance that they would be used "to kill" in case the slightest aggression had been committed, the mob would have destroyed at least the Land Office and the Jail.

#### THE NEW COURT HOUSE.

In May 1840 when Wyoming formed apart of this county, an act was passed by the Legislature, providing for the erection of a new Court House appointing Walter Hubbell, Joshua A. Spencer, and Amos P. Granger, Commissioners to locate the site and authorizing a loan from the state to the county, of \$10,000 to defray the expense of building.

Batavia having always been the county seat for old Genesee, of course expected that no change would be made, but being north of the geographical centre since the erection of Orleans county, a strong effort was immediately made by the people in the southern towns, to have the site removed to a more central point. The consequence was, another great excitement, which finally resulted in fixing the location here, but with a tacit understanding that the people of the northern section would not oppose the division of the county, a subject which then began to be seriously agitated.

Soon after the site was established the Board of Supervisors, at an extra session, appointed Paul Richards of Orangeville, and John Tomlinson of LeRoy, as building commissioners, who contracted with Elias Pelton, to do the mason work, and Ira E. Phillips and Jonathan Hutchinson, to do the wood work. Contracts were made with Knowlton Rich, and Consider Warner, of Le Roy to furnish the cut stone, and with Samuel R. Clifford of LeRoy to furnish and put up the pillars, caps &c. of Lockport stone.

In June 1841, soon after the work commenced, the county was divided, and Paul Richards having resigned in consequence of residing in the new County, Pardon C. Sherman, was appointed commissioner in his place.—The building, except the basement, was completed in 1843, so that the first Court was held in it in Feb. of that year. Subsequently Horace U. Soper and Moses Taggart were appointed a committee to finish the county Clerks office in the basement. The entire establishment when completed cost about \$17,000.

In drawing our sketch towards a close we cannot but revert to the past, and glance over the changes that have taken place in our village during the brief period of its existence. It is true they are not so wonderful in



these days of "progress" as has been witnessed in many other places, where cities and towns of later date have sprung up almost in a day, but yet only forty-eight years have elapsed since the sound of the axe and hammer were first heard on this plain, and there are those yet living among us who saw the first trees bow before the strong arm of the husbandman, and the first building arise as the germ of this beautiful village.

Of the early settlers who came to reside here previous to 1810, the following, so far as we can learn, are all that remain, and who we have arranged in the order in which they came, viz: James Brisbane, Mrs. Stevens widow of James W. Stevens, David E. Evans, Richard Smith, Mrs. Margaret Cary wife of Trumbull Cary, Trumbull Cary, Hinman Holden, Samuel C. Holden, Nathan Follett, Mrs. Elizabeth Foot, Mrs. Van Cleve, Ebenezer Mix, Aaron Van Cleve, Simeon Kellogg.

In 1817, when the writer of this came to the country, the following persons who resided here at that time, are all that are recollected as still remaining in *addition* to the above, viz: James P. Smith, Wm. H. Wells, P. L. Tracy, Dr. John Cotes, Thos. McCully, Eli H. Fish, David Locke, and Robert P. Betts.

Of all the buildings standing in the village east of the Land Office in 1820, the following is believed to be all that now remain, viz The old Court House, Mill, Land Office, H. U. Soper's house, D. E. Evans house, Mrs. Rachel Evans, do., James Brisbane do., the old Judge Stevens house, the old Keys Tavern House, the old Brisbane dwelling house, S. Grant's store, the Cary house, next east of Grant's store. J. McCullant's grocery store formerly H. Gibb's dwelling house, corner of Genesee and Mechanic street. The building now occupied by Messrs. Denslow, Ferguson, and Hurlburt originally Hart's store, west of the American Hotel, Trumbull Cary's house, Junius Smith's do, the Dr. Ross house now occupied by Rev. B. Sunderland, the brick school house, and the small wood building directly in its rear which was originally the Law office of D. B. Brown, standing on the ground now covered by Mechanic's Hall. The old Stoughton house east of Cemetery street, the old Van Cleve house, next west of Cemetery street, the old Leonard house now occupied by John Sprague, the former dwelling house of P. L. Tracy now standing opposite his Law office, the Dr. Brown house now owned and occupied by Dr. L. B. Cotes, the dwelling now occupied by William G. Bryan, Wm. Blossom's house, the old house on Centre street opposite C. Kirkham's shop. (This building is the original Tavern house built by James McKain at a very early day and stood on the ground now occupied by the American Hotel.) The house next south of the above, now occupied by Mr. Blakeney. (This building originally stood nearly in front of H. Wilber's residence east of the brick School House.) Joseph Clark's house. A part of the Western Hotel. Finally, the centre part of Wm. Seaver's dwelling house, in which he now makes his record. Casting his eye over the present population he sees a few, including those above mentioned, who have been inhabitants of the village longer than himself, but yet among them all, not one can he recognize, with the exception of Mr. Cary, as having so long resided in the same house. Under this humble roof has he and his been sheltered for very near a quarter of a century, and here he would be content to remain until called to a brighter and more permanent abode beyond the mutations of time, where he hopes ultimately to meet all those dear ones who he has here nourished and cherished.

In conclusion perhaps nothing more appropriate can be presented, especially for future reference, than a record of those now engaged in the various professions and branches of business in this village. It is possible there

may be some omissions through mistake, but in the main we think the list will be found nearly correct.

*Ministers*.—J. A. Bolles, B. Sunderland, S. M. Stimpson, Allen Steele, D. C. Houghton.

*Doctors*.—John Cotes, L. B. Cotes, H. Ganson, C. E. Ford, J. F. Baker, C. D. Griswold, J. Delamater.

*Lawyers*.—Richard Smith, P. L. Tracy, G. W. Lay, H. J. Redfield, B. Pringle, E. C. Dibble, I. A. Verplanck, M. Taggart, J. L. Brown, J. H. Martindale, (District Attorney,) H. J. Glowackie, W. G. Bryan, S. Wakeman, J. D. Merrill, T. Fitch, M. W. Hewitt, H. Wilber, H. U. Soper, (Judge Gen. Co.) J. F. Lay, M. F. Robertson, E. Pringle, B. Young, (County Treasurer) J. H. Kimberly.

*Forwarding and Commission Merchants*.—L. A. Smith, J. Foot, J. Ganson & Co.

*Dry-Goods Merchants*.—Wm H Wells & Son, Smith & Warren, G. A. Lay, Nathan T. Smith, Thorn & Holden.

*Hardware Merchants*.—Belden Otis & Co, R. Haney.

*Hotels*.—American, B. G. Tisdale, Genesee House, S. N. Bierce, Western Hotel, I. Buckus, Eagle Tavern, E. Hall, Railroad Depot, S. Frost, Dutch Tavern, A. Biechel.

*Livery Stable*.—Ferren & McCormick.

*Cabinet Makers*.—C. Kirkham, C. T. Buxton, J. T. Buxton, O. Griffith.

*Carpenters and Joiners*.—O. Dustin, R. W. Craig, D. Palmer, J. Coleman, S. Tuttle, J. L. Gardner, W. Lowden, L. Knapp, Mr. Rice, H. Graham, J. Palmer, J. R. Hart, L. Barner.

*Blacksmiths*.—F. Baxter, A. Tyrell, M. Kellogg, G. W. Miller, S. Lynn, J. Clark, J. Trumbull & Son.

*Gunsmith*.—I. M. Joslyn.

*Saddle & Harness Makers*.—Wm. Manley, A. J. Ensign, J. T. Carr.

*Masons*.—T. McCully, H. Murphy, J. Holten, D. Johnson, A. Wilcox.

*Stone Cutter*.—Fellows & Co.

*Furnacemen*.—T. Hurlburt, J. R. Smith.

*Baker*.—B. C. & O. Page.

*Cradle Maker*.—H. Naramor.

*Cooper*.—Z. York.

*Brewer*.—E. H. Fish.

*Barbers*.—J. Leonard, D. Leonard.

*Butchers*.—R. Fowler, R. Winn.

*Druggists and Booksellers*.—Wm. Seaver & Son, Fellows & Co.

*Grocers*.—C. A. Russell, John Wilson, John Kenyon, J. McCullant, Wilson & Austin, S. A. Wilson, G. Knowles, J. & R. Eager.

*Jewellers*.—J. A. Clark, E. S. Dodge.

*Hatters*.—H. & E. M. McCormick, P. Warner.

*Boot & Shoe Store*.—T. Yates, A. Joslyn, H. M. Warren, Spencer and Merrill, M. Rupp, J. P. Phillips, J. Baker.

*Milliners*.—Mrs. Denslow, Mrs. Blake, Mrs. Griffith, Mrs. Showerman & Halbert.

*Tailors*.—G. B. Hurlburt, D. Ferguson, J. Jordan, J. M. Royce, Nathan Smith, John Allen, Biessenger & Rebstock.

*Printers*.—Wm. Seaver & Son, D. D. Wuit.

*Book Binders*.—G. Kiesz.

*Painters*.—H. W. Ashling, Howe & Barnard, P. S. Moffett, E. Woolsey, O. N. Sanford, W. McIntyre.

*Carriage Makers*.—J. Clark, G. W. Miller, A. Peck.















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